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THE

PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH

VOL. I.

THE

PROPHECIES OF ISAIAH

A NEW TRANSLATION

WITH COMMENTARY AND APPENDICES

BY THE

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IN TWO VOLUMES

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PREFACE.

IT is now ten years since the author first approached the Bible-reading public. They have been years to him fruitful of results both in study and in inner experience, and he would fain hope that not only has his knowledge increased, but his mental and spiritual vision been purified and enlarged. The work which he now offers is independent of his earlier work,[1] to which the student may still be referred as partly supplementing the present, and especially as containing a moderate statement (differing in some respects from that ordinarily presented) of the anti-traditional point of view. It is only fair to add that since writing that work the author's views have been modified on some of the critical questions at issue (see page 232). The difficulty and complication of these questions is much greater than he supposed, and he now believes that they can best be treated in a book specially devoted to the critical aspects of the Old Testament writings.

The present work is exclusively exegetical; it appears to the author that a more thorough exegesis must precede the fruitful investigation of critical problems. It is the interest of all parties to ascertain

[1] *The Book of Isaiah Chronologically Arranged.* An amended version with historical and critical introductions and explanatory notes. London: Macmillan & Co. 1870.

the exegetical data, and these he has endeavoured to set down impartially, without allowing himself to be deterred by accusations of inconsistency, such as even his earlier work was exposed to from the 'Speaker's Commentary' on Isaiah. If it is a fact that the exegetical phenomena are conflicting, let them be fairly represented as such; the final critical solution will have to take account of all the data of the problem.

This attempt at impartiality, or (if the reader will) this disregard of consistency, is one feature of this commentary. Another is the use made of the Assyrian inscriptions. Though obliged to give up the study of cuneiform himself, the author has used every endeavour to sift his information, and he believes that he has thrown some light on the historical circumstances of several of the prophecies. A third feature is the investigation, or at least illustration, of the forms of belief, and of the progress of doctrine, in this and the cognate prophetic literature. This is a subject, no doubt, which may be treated very differently, according as the writer's avowed or concealed bias is friendly or adverse to Christianity. The present writer does not pretend to be without a bias, and it is of a more definite character than might perhaps be expected from a former disciple of Ewald. But while fully allowing the justification of a distinctly Christian exegesis (i. e. one which interprets prophecy in the light of fulfilment, and developes the germs of doctrine in a New Testament-sense), he protests, with his revered friend, Dr. Delitzsch,[1] against the intrusion of Christian elements

[1] See the opening words of section x. of his *Biblical Commentary on the Psalms.*

into philological exegesis. There is a philological point of view, and there is a Christian; the two may be combined, but cannot safely be confused.

Here the author ventures to close his confessions relative to his personal views on theological subjects. At a future time he may have a word given him to say on at least one of the larger questions connected with prophecy (see pp. 199, 200); but to enter upon these here would defeat his present object, which is rather to clarify the facts than prematurely to manifest the deductions.

He has still the pleasing duty of expressing his thanks to friends. Mr. Driver, of New College, has materially assisted him in the revision of the proofs of the translation and commentary, and the representatives of the late Dr. Weir, Professor of Hebrew in the University of Glasgow, and a member of the Old Testament Revision Company, have most kindly given him permission to examine and make extracts from that eminent scholar's note-books on Isaiah. The results of his examination, though small, are of genuine value, and will help to perpetuate the memory of a singularly fresh and candid mind. They will appear chiefly in the second volume. The late professor had devoted special attention to obscure passages, and occasionally produced emendations which, to say the least, throw great light on the text. Specimens of his exegesis have also from time to time been given; his exegesis, however, though generally sober, and sometimes very clear-sighted, was by no means so remarkable as his criticism of the text. His notes are not in a state for anything like full publication.

The second volume, which it is hoped will not be long delayed, will contain the remainder of the commentary, some critical and philological notes, and a few essays or appendices, including one on the Christian element in the Book of Isaiah.

*** Students are particularly recommended to turn to all the illustrative passages referred to in the notes, if possible in the Hebrew Bible, but if not, in some revised translation, or in such an annotated edition of the Authorised Version as that published by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode. Their attention is also directed to the Supplementary Notes at the end of this volume, and to the special notes appended to chapters i. and xliv. It may be desirable to add that the commentary does not aim at being exhaustive, but mainly at drawing attention to points which seem to have been inadequately considered by previous commentators.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

B.C.

740? Death of Uzziah.

734. Expedition of Tiglath-Pileser against Damascus, Israel, and Philistia; tribute of *Yahukhazi Yahudai*, i.e. Jehoahaz (= Ahaz) the Judahite, to Assyria.

727. Accession of Shalmaneser.

726. Accession of Hezekiah.

722. Accession of Sargon and capture of Samaria.

713? Merodach Baladan's embassy to Hezekiah.

711. Hezekiah's illness; Sargon's siege of Ashdod, and invasion of Judah.

710. Sargon's conquest of Babylon.

709. Capture of Merodach Baladan.

720. Great defeat of Egypt at Raphia.

705. Accession of Sennacherib.

701. Sennacherib's invasion of Judah.

681. Accession of Esar-haddon.

672. Esar-haddon's conquest of Egypt.

586. Nebuchadnezzar's capture of Jerusalem.

539. Capture of Babylon by Cyrus.

536. First return of Jewish exiles.

PRINCIPAL ABBREVIATIONS.

II. *Isaiah.* Second part of the Book of Isaiah.

I. C. A. 'The Book of Isaiah Chronologically Arranged' (by the present writer).

Q. P. B. 'The Holy Bible, &c., with Various Renderings and Readings' (published by Messrs. Eyre and Spottiswoode, Printers to the Queen).

K. A. T. 'Die Keilinschriften und das Alte Testament, von Eberhard Schrader.'

A. E. Aben Ezra (also referred to in the commentary as Ibn Ezra).

Calv. Calvin.
Del. Delitzsch.
Ew. Ewald.
Ges. Gesenius.
Gesch. Geschichte.
Hend. Henderson.
Hengst. Hengstenberg.
Hitz. Hitzig.
Knob. Knobel.
Naeg. Naegelsbach.
Pesh. Peshito.
Sept. Septuagint.
Targ. Targum.

Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch. Transactions of Society of Biblical Archæology.

Vitr. Vitringa.
Vulg. Vulgate.

Zeitschr. d. d. m. Ges. Zeitschrift der deutschen morgenländischen Gesellschaft.

Corrigenda.

Page 5, note [e]. *After* 'Sept.' *insert* 'Pesh.'
„ 31, line 10 of translation. *For* 'of Hosts' *read* 'Sabáoth.'
„ 46, col. 2, line 10 from foot. *For* 'his' *read* 'her.'
„ 47, col. 2 (quotation from Micah). *For* 'thus' *read* 'then.'
„ 124, note [d]. *For* 'Sept.' *read* 'Aquila, Theodotion, Symmachus.'
„ 192, line 16 from foot. *For* 'Isa. xxxvii.' *read* 'Isa. xxxvi.'
„ 222, col. 2, line 9 from foot. *For* 'note' *read* 'note [q].'
„ 253, col. 1, line 5 from foot. *For* 'prophesie (see Ps. xxii.)' *read* 'prophetic (see Ps. xxii.).'

ISAIAH.

CHAPTER I.

'THE Great Arraignment' is the title appropriately suggested by Ewald for this prophecy. Jehovah is the plaintiff, Israel the defendant, the prophet a deeply interested bystander and interlocutor. Hence the prophecy naturally falls into four symmetrical stanzas or strophes, dividing at *vv.* 10, 18, 24 (Ewald, Drechsler). Str. I. contains the charge, with an appeal to the witnesses; II. meets a preliminary objection of Israel's to the production of a charge; III. offers reconciliation on condition of Israel's amendment; IV. fulminates the judgment which the rejection of this gracious offer renders inevitable. The prophecy begins by addressing the whole people as equally guilty; then directs itself more especially to the higher classes; and, last of all, anticipates that some will be converted, and so escape destruction. There is no finer specimen of prophetic oratory than this (see note on *v.* 10).

It is difficult to say when this prophecy was most probably written,—or rather, it was difficult in the infancy of Assyrian studies. Hence we find Caspari[1] and Dr. Kay referring it to the period of Uzziah and Jotham; Ges., Knob., and Del. to that of Ahaz; Vitr., Hitz., Ew., Kuenen, Grätz, and Naeg. to that of Hezekiah. The fact is that, in some respects, it might have been written almost equally well in any one of these periods, which suggests that it was designed, in its present form, as a preface to a larger or smaller collection of Isaiah's prophecies. Still it would be strange if Isaiah had been able altogether to exclude references to passing events, nor does he appear to have done so. He tells us that the land of Judah has been flooded with a foreign soldiery—'your land, strangers devour it' (*v.* 7), a description which points rather to the Assyrians than to an army partly composed of Israelites (vii. 1). There are no points of contact between this prophecy and those composed with reference to Sennacherib's invasion. It must therefore have been composed *before* that event,—not *after* it (Oort), as there is no allusion to the destruction of the Assyrian army. There seems no alternative but to suppose Isaiah to refer to the first Assyrian invasion of Judah, viz. that of Sargon.[2] He wrote, probably, after the stress of the storm had passed, for during a calamity

[1] See especially his *Beiträge zur Einl. in das Buch Jesaja*, part i.
[2] For the evidence for, and bearing of, this discovery, see on x. 5, &c.

it was not his wont to speak so roughly and discouragingly. The prophet, I think, recalls to mind in *vv.* 7-9 the sufferings caused by the invasion, but heightens the gloom of the picture with a view to impress the future readers of his prophecies. He gives us not so much a realistic account of what actually took place, but what might and must result from a continued neglect of true religion. (Comp. the *ἐγκαταλειφθήσεται* of LXX. and the *derelinquetur* of Vulg.) Still his description is based upon facts, and is not entirely imaginative. The sketch of the moral and religious condition of Judah will in part apply to the reign of Hezekiah (whose reformation was only superficial), but only in part. The crimes imputed to the princes in *vv.* 15, 18, 21, are only mentioned again in Isaiah's earliest discourses (iv. 4, v. 7), and the openness of the 'apostasy' leads us to think rather of Ahaz. The theory that chap. i. was designed as an introduction enables us easily to reconcile all the conflicting data.

[1] VISION of Isaiah, son of Amoz, which he saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem in the days of Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, kings of Judah. [2] Hear, O heavens, and give

[1] The heading, in its present form, belongs to the whole of the prophecies of Isaiah. There may, however, have been a time when it stood at the head of a smaller portion of prophecy, for the words 'concerning Judah and Jerusalem' do not suit all the prophecies. Vitringa supposes the heading to have been originally written for chap. i., and to have had the concluding words ('in the days of,' &c.) added to it by the scribes who collected Isaiah's works into a volume. But as the very similar heading to chap. ii. belongs to a group of prophecies (ii.-v.), it is reasonable to suppose that the heading of chap. i. once did likewise. It cannot, indeed, have been penned by Isaiah, if (as is most probable) none of the prophecies were really written in the reign of Uzziah. Here, as in the case of the headings of the Psalms, we seem driven to assume the handiwork of the scribes during the Exile, a period when the study of the religious writings formed the chief consolation of the pious. The same writer, or writers, may have prefixed the headings of Hosea and Micah, and perhaps of some of the other books, also of Isaiah ii. and xiii. (note the similarity of form). ——**Vision**] Perhaps collectively for 'visions'; occurs again in the headings of Nahum and Obadiah. A technical term for the prophetic intuitions or inward perceptions. A synonymous phrase is 'hearing' (xxviii. 22; comp. xxi. 10). He who 'makes to see' is of course Jehovah (Am. vii. 1), through the objective influence of His Spirit (see on viii. 11). Thus 'vision' = prophetic revelation (comp. 1 Sam. iii. 15), just as 'seer' = prophet; but while 'seer' was early supplanted by 'prophet' (*nābī*), 1 Sam. ix. 9, 'vision' held its ground till a much later time (Dan. ix. 23, 1 Chr. xvii. 15). 'Prophecy' (*n'būāh*), only occurs thrice (2 Chr. ix. 29, xv. 8, Neh. vi. 12).——**And Jerusalem**] i.e., especially Jerus., Isaiah being distinctively a city-prophet.

[2] **Hear, O heavens**] i.e., either: Bear witness to the judicial sentence which Jehovah is about to deliver (cf. Deut. iv. 26, xxx. 19, xxxi. 28, Ps. l. 4, Jer. vi. 19); or, since Jehovah is speaking rather in sorrow than in anger, Listen with reverence to Jehovah your Creator, whom His rational creatures refuse to hear, cf. Jer. ii. 12. Many find here an allusion to Deut. xxxii. 1, but (apart from the question as to the date of Deuteronomy) there is so much

ear, O earth, for Jehovah speaketh: sons I have made great and high, and they have broken away from me. [3] The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib: Israel is without knowledge, my people is without understanding. [4] Alas for the sinful nation, the people burdened with guilt, the seed of evil doers, the sons that do corruptly: they have forsaken Jehovah, they have spurned Israel's Holy One, they have withdrawn backward. [5] Why [a] will ye be still smitten, going on in apostasy? Every [b] head is sick, and every [b] heart

[a] On what part, Vulg., Ew. [b] The whole, Ew.

greater depth of feeling in the passage of Isaiah that one is loth to admit an imitation. The expressions (see Lowth) are the common property of poets. The tenderness of these opening verses reminds us of Hosea, as the section *vv.* 10–20 reminds us by its severity of Amos. ——**Sons**] This word is placed in the forefront to account for the singular favours about to be mentioned. What can a loving parent refuse to his *sons*?——**I have made great and high**] i.e., I have reared Israel to maturity, and set him on high among the nations. Comp. Hos. i. 10.——**Rebelled**] The highest degree of sin. 'For he addeth unto his sin rebellion,' Job xxxiv. 37, '. . . sons of the living God' (xi. 1, Ex. iv. 22).

[3] **The Ox . . .**] So Jeremiah (viii. 7) contrasts the insensibility of Israel with the sagacity of the stork.

[4] **Seed of evil doers**] i.e., a seed (or, race), consisting of—not descended from—evil doers. Comp. xiv. 20, lxv. 23, where the context is clearer than here.——**Forsaken . . . spurned . . . withdrawn backward**] Observe the climax—alienation, insult, idolatry. On the implication in the last phrase, see Ezek. xiv. 3. It is, however, not so much outward idolatry which is referred to, as the idolatry of the heart; see on *v.* 21.——**Israel's Holy One**] i.e., He who shows himself holy in the midst of Israel. Holiness is a complex idea (*verè inexhaustæ significationis*, Bengel), and not easy to explain even approximately. It is clear, however, that it stands in close relation to the conception of the Divine glory. In vi. 3 the Trisagion is accompanied by 'The whole earth is full of His glory.' But there is this distinction between God's glory and His holiness. The sense of creaturely weakness is awakened by the vision of the one; the feeling of human sinfulness by that of the other (vi. 5); and this because, whereas the glory of God extends over all nature, His holiness is specially exhibited within the sphere of His kingdom. Hence the latter is specially exhibited in judicial interpositions in behalf of Israel. And yet the Israelites, who owed so much to the Divine holiness, now insultingly spurned it. (On Holiness, see Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament*, i. 154, &c., Duhm, *Die Theologie der Propheten*, 169–172; Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte*, ii. 1–142.)

[5] **Why will ye . . .**] Why bring down fresh judgments upon your head through persisting in your infidelity? Kay well compares Ezek. xviii. 31. (On the rend. see Del. and Kay.)——**Every head is sick . . .**] Instead of descending from the public to the private calamity, the prophet adopts the more striking plan of ascending from the individual to the body corporate. He singles out the two noblest members of the body, the

faint. [6] From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no sound part in it; wounds and wales and festering sores—not pressed, and not bound up, and not softened with oil. [7] Your land—a desolation, your cities—burnt with fire, your tillage—in your face strangers devour it; even a desolation, like the overthrow of [c] Sodom. [8] And the daughter of Zion is left as a booth in a vineyard, as a lodging-place in a cucumber-field, as a [d] besieged city.[d] [9] Had not Jehovah Sabáoth left us

[c] So Ew., Studer, Lagarde. Text has, strangers.
[d] Fort of watch (comp. 2 Kings xvii. 9), Hitz., Ges. (*Thesaurus*).—City broken through, *i.e.* defenceless, Weir. (conj.)

seats of the intellectual and moral life. There is not a head nor a heart which has escaped the infection of sin. Cf. Jer. xvii. 9, 'The heart is . . . wofully sick,' Gen. viii. 21.

[6] **From the sole . . .**] It is the state which is thus characterised (cf. x. 16, xvii. 4). The meaning of the figures is determined by that of the figures in *v.* 5. The inward sickness of the individuals produces a mass of moral corruption in the nation, and no attempt has been made to apply a remedy. 'Binding up' is a well-known figure for spiritual regeneration, Hos. xiv. 4, Ps. xli. 4. 'To heal' (*rāfā*) in Hebrew means properly to sew up a wound.

[7] The condition of the land is as sad as that of the people. The wild soldiery of Sargon has wrought a ruin only comparable to that of Sodom. But the men of Sodom were foreigners, Israel is a 'son.' It was a painful surprise to the Israelites that their land could become the prey of the Gentiles, comp. lxiii. 19, Jer. x. 25. [On the reading, see crit. note. The text-read. seems to me scarcely translatable. The conjecture '. . . of a rain-storm' is plausible (comp. Ps. xc. 5); but 1, the verb 'overturn' is specially appropriated to the 'catastrophe' of Sodom and Gomorrah (xiii. 19, Am. iv. 11, Jer. xlix. 18, l. 40, Deut. xxix, 23 [22], and 2, we should not expect, in so artistically composed a chapter, to find *zérem* so close to *zārīm*—a confusion would be unavoidable.]

[8] There is one qualification to be made; the capital remains, but how forlorn and helpless! See *Notes and Criticisms*, p. 2.—**The daughter of Zion**] A highly poetical phrase, here and in general, a personification of the city and inhabitants of Jerusalem. Sometimes, however, it seems to mean the city without the inhabitants (Lam. ii. 8); sometimes the inhabitants without the city (Mic. iv. 10).—**As a booth . . . a lodging-place**] See xxiv. 20, xxvii. 3 (note), Job xxvii. 18; also Trench's instructive note, *Parables*, p. 195, and Wetzstein's in Delitzsch, *Hiob*, p. 318.—**As a besieged city**] This is very difficult to harmonise with the preceding figures. Can Isaiah have written thus? Dr. Weir's conjecture is very ingenious. True, Jerusalem had walls, but it might as well have been without them, for the Assyrian 'despiseth cities' (or citadels), xxxiii. 8. See the Hebr. of Prov. xxv. 28, 2 Chr. xxxii. 5.

[9] The first revelation closes with a reflection in the name of the people. It is touching to see how the prophet's human feelings force an utterance. He seems to feel that the statement in *v.* 7 was too strong:—'not yet quite like Sodom.'—**Jehovah Sabáoth**] The phrase is used as a kind of seal or attestation to a specially solemn prophecy. This has become almost a rule with most of

a remnant, [almost *] like Sodom should we be, Gomorrah should we resemble!

10 Hear the word of Jehovah, ye judges of Sodom; give ear to the instruction of our God, ye people of Gomorrah.

* Omitted in Sept., Vulg. So Geiger.

the prophets. Yet there are some exceptions, as Ewald remarks. Hosea, Ezekiel, and Micah, (if, as many critics think, iv. 1–4 is quoted by Micah from another prophet), avoid it altogether. Jehovah Sabáoth is, I think, a fuller and more expressive *proper name* for the God (primarily) of Israel: more expressive than Jehovah alone in that it lays special stress on his supramundane being, thus becoming equivalent to the later phrase 'the God of heaven,' 2 Chr. xxxvi. 23, Neh. i. 4, 5, Ps. cxxxvi. 26, (Gen. xxiv. 3, 7?), &c. See also Appendix to this chapter.

10 Yet, strange to say, the principal men of Jerusalem think they have completely discharged their religious obligations. A second revelation dispels this illusion. By a striking apostrophe, which Steinthal the philologist pronounces unequalled, the prophet addresses them as **Judges of Sodom** (comp. iii. 9, and, with Dr. Kay, Deut. xxxii. 32). Into this short phrase he condenses the philosophy of their misfortunes. So severe a punishment argues a more than commonly heinous offence. Out of this passage the Arabs have distilled the proverb, 'More unjust than a kadee of Sodom' (*kādī* = *kātsīn*, the word used by Isaiah, and in a similar context by Micah iii. 9). Obs., no mention is made of the king. The judges seem to have acquired the whole executive power, and to have greatly impaired the royal prerogative (cf. Jer. xxxviii. 5).——**The instruction of our God**] A. V. renders 'the law . . . ,' implying a reference to the Mosaic law. This, however, is doubtful at best. The word (*Tōrāh*), rendered 'teaching,' means etymologically, 'direction,' or 'instruction,' and hence was the suitable term for the authoritative counsel given orally by the priests (Deut. xvii. 11) and prophets to those who consulted them on points of ritual and practice respectively. It is unsafe, therefore, in the majority of passages to render *Tōrāh* 'law' (with A. V.), when 'instruction' or 'revelation' will suit all the requirements of the context. See Isa. ii. 3, viii. 16, xlii. 4, Jer. xviii. 18, Ezek. vii. 26, Hag. ii. 11, Zech. vii. 12; and especially Jer. xxvi. 4, 5, where 'to walk in my Tōrāh' is parallel to 'to hearken to the words of my servants the prophets.' There are, indeed, a few passages where some modern critics render *Tōrāh* 'law.' 'The written law of Moses had come into general acceptance from the days of Josiah,' and 'the "law" already presented itself during the Exile as the one lofty object which, despised and rejected now, would in the future once more win from all mankind a lofty reverence and unique acknowledgment.' So writes Ewald, referring to Isa. xlii. 4, 21, li. 4, 7, Lam. ii. 9 (20), Ezek. vii. 26 (*History of Israel*, v. 133). Even here, however, the sense '(prophetic) revelation' is quite satisfactory. The Book of II Isaiah is not concerned with legal ordinances; Ezek. vii. 26 is explained by Deut. xvii. 11; and in Lam. ii. 9 *Tōrāh* is parallel to '(prophetic) vision.' The only absolutely certain reference to the Pentateuch is in Mal. iv. 4. (Am. ii. 4, and Hos. viii. 12 appear to allude to early compends of laws.) The context, however, shows that such a reference cannot be intended here, and that Tōrāh means the revelation which Isaiah is about to communicate.

11 Of what use is the multitude of your sacrifices to me? saith
Jehovah; I am satiated with the burnt-offerings of rams, and
the fat of fed beasts, and in the blood of bullocks and lambs
and he-goats I have no pleasure. 12 When ye come to [f]see
my face,[f] who hath required this at your hands—to trample
my courts? 13 Bring no more false [g]offerings; a sweet

[f] So Peshito (Syriac), Luzzatto, Geiger.—Appear before me, Ew., Del., Naeg. (after Hebrew vowel-points).
[g] Meal-offerings; incense, Ew., Del., Naeg.

11 The 'judges of Sodom' may **multiply sacrifices**, but Jehovah attaches no value to them. Not that Isaiah intends to condemn ritual altogether, any more than St. James does (i. 26, 27). His utterance must be qualified by what he tells us himself of his early vision (see vi. 6), and by a consideration of his circumstances. He was not only a prophet, but a reformer, or at any rate the friend of a reforming king, and it is not probable that he would, as some have supposed, destroy the very foundations of the established order of things. It is true, however, that the duties of religion which he most inculcates are the moral ones, and that he is no friend to the existing priesthood (xxviii. 7). For statements of contemporary prophets, see Am. v. 21–24, Hos. vi. 6 ('and not sacrifice' = 'more than burnt-offerings),' Mic. vi. 6–8. —— **Sacrifices**] Isaiah means those in which the life of a victim was taken. Of this class, the most important were the burnt-offerings. The mention of rams points especially to trespass-offerings (see on liii. 10), as this was the only kind of sacrifice limited to a ram (Lev. v. 15, 16), rams having, it is said, been a favourite medium of currency in primitive times (Kalisch, *Leviticus*, i. 278). 'Fat' is mentioned because, except in the burnt-offerings, the fat pieces were burnt; 'blood,' because in all the sacrifices of this class the blood was sprinkled on the altar.

12 **To see my face**] (On reading, see crit. note.) To 'see God,' men must be 'pure in heart (Matt. v. 8), or, in the words of a Psalmist, 'the upright shall behold his countenance' (Ps. xi. 7). It is therefore a purely formal and imaginary seeing which the prophet refers to—a vestige probably of that unspiritual stage when the Israelites worshipped God under the form of images (Judg. xvii. 3, 4, 1 Kings xii. 28, 29). The prohibition of idolatry did not extinguish this merely formal religion, for the invisible God could still, it was thought, be propitiated through the Temple-ritual. It was not everyone who could reconcile the sanctity of the Temple with the illimitable character of the Divine Being as it is reconciled in the beautiful 'prayer of Solomon' (1 Kings viii. 27–30). The phrase, 'to see God,' is therefore a relic of what may be called roughly the pre-prophetic or pre-Mosaic age. It is not merely, as Hupfeld thinks, a metaphor from a royal court, into which only a select few could have ingress. The 'face of God' was no doubt a symbolic expression, but one of a less commonplace order than the eminent critic supposes. It represents in the old Semitic religious systems generally that aspect of the Divine Being which was turned towards man; and this aspect, it may be added, was regarded as personal (comp. Ex. xxxiii. 14). Does not this seem to explain the prayer in Ps. xvii. 15, 'May I be satisfied, when I awake, with thine image' (comp. Ps. xli. 12)? See also on lix. 2.——**To trample my courts**] Like the oxen led in to sacrifice; so formal is your attendance.

13 **Offerings**] Taking *minkhāh*

smoke[5] is an abomination to me; the new moon and the sabbath, the calling of a convocation. . . . I cannot bear wickedness together with a solemn assembly. [14] Your new moons and your set days my soul hateth; they are an encumbrance to me, I am weary of bearing. [15] And if ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; even if ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood. [16] Wash ye, make you clean, take away the evil of your works from before mine eyes; cease to do evil, [17] learn to do well, seek out justice, righten the violent man, do justice to the orphan, plead for the widow.

[18] Come now, and let us bring our dispute to an end, saith Jehovah. Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall become

in its primary sense of 'gift,' i.e., sacrifice in general, as in Gen. iv. 3, 5, 1 Sam. ii. 17, Mal. i. 10; and in the common phrase, 'the evening sacrifice' (*minkhāh*). Dr. Kay, with Ew., Del., &c., adopts the secondary and more common sense of 'meal-offering.' But why should the least important kind of sacrifice be singled out? After the mention of the 'courts,' we expect at least an implicit reference to bloody offerings. The reason why so many adopt the less natural rendering is the supposed reference to incense in the next clause (see Lev. ii. 2). But the word they render 'incense' (*k'tōreth*) means properly 'a sweet smoke,' as in Ps. lxvi. 15, 'with the sweet smoke of rams' (see Hupfeld *ad loc.*).——**The new moon . . . convocation**] This corresponds to the division in a much later book, 'the sabbaths, the new moons, and the solemn feasts' (2 Chr. viii. 13). The calling or proclaiming of convocation belonged properly to the great festivals (Lev. xxiii. 4), though, apparently by an afterthought, to give greater honour to the Sabbath, the weekly festival also receives the name of 'convocation' (*ibid. v.* 3). For the new moon, see Num. x. 10, xxviii. 11–16.——**I cannot bear . . .**] Before he has completed one construction, he begins another; he is carried away by indignation. Such strictness in ritual combined with such moral laxity!

[15] **Many prayers**] Forms of prayer are nowhere directly ordained in the existing Pentateuch, though patterns of prayer are given for special occasions, Num. vi. 23–26, Deut. xxvi. 5–10, 13–15. 'The men of the Great Assembly' (i.e., the Scripturists who succeeded Ezra) were the first to prescribe a definite form of prayer ('*Berachoth*, f. 28*b*, 29*a*').——**Full of blood**] i.e., guilty of judicial murders (comp. v. 7). Perhaps, however, 'bloodshed' may be put by synecdoche for 'violent conduct leading to the ruin of others,' the 'soul' or vital principle being 'in the blood.' This view may be supported by lix. 3, Deut. xxxii. 43, Ezek. vii. 23, Prov. i. 11. Comp. with caution Hupfeld on Ps. ix. 13.

[17] **Righten**] Bring into the right way. In these verses we seem to have an echo of the justice-loving Amos (see chap. v.), who was *senior* to Isaiah.——**Plead for the widow**] i.e., let not the want of an advocate (no uncommon thing in the court of a modern kāḍī) prevent you, the judges, from doing justice to her.

[18] **Let us bring our dispute to an end**] 'Let us reason together' (A. V.) is a misleading translation; the Divine judge in this passage does not reason, but commands

white as snow; though they be red as crimson, they shall become as wool. [19] If ye be willing and obey, the good of the land shall ye eat; [20] but if ye be unwilling and defiant, by the sword shall ye be eaten, for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it. [21] How hath become a harlot the faithful city, she that was full of justice; righteousness was wont to lodge in her, but now assassins! [22] Thy silver is become dross, thy choice drink thinned with water. [23] Thy law-makers are law-breakers and in partnership with thieves; every one loveth a

amendment. ——**Though . . . white as snow**] We must not explain this on the analogy of a passage in a much later work, Ps. li. 7. There, no doubt, a free and unconditional pardon is attached to an unreserved repentance and humble trust in God's mercy. But the repentance required by Isaiah is a trifle compared with that of Ps. li.; it is comparatively external, and does but touch the surface of the conscience. It is not spiritual joy (as in Ps. li. 8, 12) which is promised in Isaiah, but the enjoyment of the fruits of the land. This is guaranteed on condition of a reformation in practice. The promise in *v.* 18 is conditioned by *v.* 19*a*, just as the promises in lviii. 8, 9*a* are conditioned by *vv.* 9*b*, 10. There is a curious application of this passage to the times of the last good high priest, Simeon the Just, in the Talmud; see Derenbourg, *Hist. de la Palestine*, p. 48. On the use of crimson-red for 'dark,' comp. Song of Sol. vii. 5, and see Del.'s note here.

[19, 20] **The good of the land**] All outward blessings shall be yours. Obs. the antithesis, 'shall ye eat' . . . 'shall ye be eaten.' The sword is personified, as in xxxiv. 5, 6.

[21] **How hath become . . .**] This short, plaintive strain is not a verse of a current song (Roorda), for lyric snatches are not uncommon in the Prophets, and the idea is that of v. 7. Comp. for the form, Lam. i. 1. It is the prophet who speaks, in the manner of a Greek chorus, to fill up the pause, while the bystanders are anxiously waiting, but waiting in vain, for Israel's reply. ——**A harlot**] Even heathen religions supposed a mysterious union to exist between a god and his worshippers (see on xliv. 11), symbolised by the marriage relation. To the heathen, however, this union was a hereditary physical one; to the Old Test. writers it was more than this—a devotion of the heart to Jehovah. Hence every moral delinquency could be described as adultery. It is in a moral sense that Jerusalem is called 'a harlot' by Isaiah, as the context proves. So in Ps. lxxiii. 26, 27 (quoted by Oehler), the pious man who says, 'My heart's rock and my portion is God,' is opposed to 'those who commit whoredom away from thee;' and so our Lord calls the Scribes and Pharisees 'an adulterous generation' (Matt. xii. 39).——**Faithful city**] i.e., faithful to her divine husband; comp. Hos. ii.——**To lodge**] i.e., to find a hospitable reception (lit. to pass the night).——**Assassins**] The word indicates that they made murder an art or profession (so Hos. vi. 9).

[22] **Thy silver . . .**] 'Silver' and 'choice drink' are figures for the great men of Jerusalem. The former occurs again in Jer. vi. 28, 30, Ezek. xxii. 18. The other side of the figure is given in *v.* 25.

[23] Paronomasia, as in Hos. ix. 15. **law-breakers**] With reference to the Tōrāh, or (not so much 'law' as) directions given from time to time by the prophets.——**Thieves**]

bribe, and pursueth rewards; to the orphan they do not justice, and the cause of the widow cometh not unto them.

[24] Therefore—an oracle of the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, the Hero of Israel: Ha! I will appease me through mine adversaries, and avenge me on mine enemies, [25] and will bring back my hand upon thee, smelting out as with lye thy dross, and will take away all thy lead-alloy; [26] and I will bring back thy judges as aforetime, and thy counsellors as at the beginning: afterwards thou shalt be called, Citadel of

i.e., the unjust rich who appeared before their tribunal, and bribed them with a share of their plunder (comp. iii. 13). Dr. Kay well compares Ps. l. 18.——**A bribe**] Comp. Mic. vii. 3 (an expansion of Isaiah's phrase).

[24] **Oracle**] Etymologically, whisper; a phrase possibly mythic in its origin (comp. on viii. 19), but no doubt retained as an apt symbol of the hidden action of the supernatural. Comp. Job iv. 12–16.—— **of the Lord** . . .] Such an accumulation of Divine names is found nowhere else in Isaiah (Del.). They express the manifoldness of the Divine power.—— **The Hero of Israel**] 'Hero,' an uncommon word, only found in combination with Israel (as here), and with Jacob, as in xlix. 26, lx. 16; also in the original passage, Gen. xlix. 24, and in Ps. cxxxii. 2, 5.—— **I will appease myself**] In the next clause we have 'avenge myself.' In fact, the two verbs are almost the same in pronunciation, and spring from the same root, meaning 'to fetch one's breath,' 'to give vent to a strong emotion.' The context clearly shows that the relation of God to man thus indicated is not, in the sense of the prophet, occasioned by caprice, but by the holiness of the Divine nature (comp. Ps. xviii. 26, 27). 'The standpoint of the inspired writers is a spiritual realism, alike removed from both spiritualism [in the philosophical sense] and materialism' (Martensen, *Christian Ethics*, p. 71).

[25-27] With a few pen-strokes the prophet sums up the spiritual future of Israel. First of all, he corrects the description in *vv.* 22, 23.—— **Bring back my hand upon thee**] The phrase is generally used of punishment (Ps. lxxxi. 14, Amos i. 8); here, however, as in Zech. xiii. 7, a favourable sense predominates, though the Divine favour was necessarily preceded by the removal of the causes of indignation. 'Quod dicitur, *reducam manum meam ad te*, si in te spectes, vel ad castigantem vel ad sanantem et beneficam manum referri potest. Sed posterius hic obtinet, quicquid alii reclament.' Vitringa. ——**As with lye**] or potash (Job ix. 30), which was used as a flux in purifying metals.

[26] **As aforetime**] 'I remember to thy good the kindness of thy youth, the love of thy bridal state, thy following of me in the wilderness, in a land unsown' (Jer. ii. 2). The regeneration of Israel is to be as great an event as its first foundation on a religious basis by Moses, Joshua, and Samuel. In support of this explanation of the phrase, see lii. 4, Jer. vii. 12. ——**Citadel of righteousness**] Vitringa and Naeg. see a connection between this passage and the names of Melchizedek (Gen. xiv. 18) and Jehovah Tsidkenu (Jer. xxxiii. 15; cf. xxiii. 6). But in both names the righteousness spoken of has a different shade of meaning from the righteousness mentioned here. The former is God's righteousness, His faithful adherence to His revealed principles of action (Mel-

righteousness, Faithful city. [27] Zion shall be delivered through justice, and her converts through righteousness. [28] But a demolition of rebels and sinners together! and they who forsake Jehovah shall perish. [29] For they shall be ashamed because of the terebinths which ye had pleasure in, and blush for the gardens which ye chose; [30] yea, ye shall be as the terebinth whose leaf withereth, and as a garden that hath no water; [31] and the strong one shall become tow, and his work a spark, and they shall both burn together, and none quencheth.

chizedek means 'King-righteousness,' the King being God); the latter, the righteousness of man to man, civil justice.

[27] **Shall be delivered**] A.V. 'redeemed'; but this is not the primary meaning of the word (*pādāk*), and is often unsuitable; comp. Ps. cvi. 10: 'and delivered from the hand of the enemy.' The idea is that of cutting loose.——**Through justice . . . through righteousness**] This may mean either the judicial manifestation of God's righteousness (so Del.), cf. v. 16, or the righteousness of the people of Zion, especially of their new judges (so the Rabbis, followed by Ew., Hitz., Knob.). The latter is favoured by the context (see esp. *v.* 21), and is in harmony with Isaiah's severe advocacy of the moral law. Vitr. calls this 'doctrina damnabilis superbiæ,' but forgets Matt. v. 20. ——**Her converts**] Lit. her turning ones; i.e., the escaped remnant which shall turn unto 'God-the-Mighty-One' (x. 21), 'when the Lord shall finish his whole work upon mount Zion' (x. 12). Isaiah's first allusion to this great doctrine. From *v.* 21 it is clear that the remnant, in the mind of Isaiah, was to consist of the poor and weak, who alone had the germ of humility required by the fear of Jehovah. A clearer statement still in xxix. 19, 20.

[28] The first clause, having no verb, is to be taken as an exclamation; it is explained in the more complete clause which follows.——**Rebels**] or renegades. Those who have inwardly and outwardly 'broken away from' Jehovah (same word *v.* 2).——**Sinners**] Those who lead a life of open sin.——**Together**, i.e., without exception. **Those who forsake Jehovah**] Those who in the one way or the other have alienated themselves from God.

[29] **The gardens**] or, the groves. These are hardly pleasure-gardens (Hitz.) for there is a contrast between 'forsaking Jehovah' and 'choosing the gardens.' Groves were the scenes of the worship of Ashérah, the Canaanitish goddess of fertility and good fortune (xvii. 8); see lvii. 5, lxvi. 17, 2 Kings xvi. 4; and comp. Juvenal, *Sat.* iii. 13, vi. 545. Votive offerings may still be seen hanging upon trees on the east side of the Jordan (Peschel, *Völkerkunde*, p. 261).——**They . . . ye**] A sudden change of persons is common in the animated style of the prophets.

[31] **The strong one**] The mighty and rich (the word will cover both meanings) will refuse conversion, and suffer destruction. —— **His work**] i.e., his idol, cf. xli. 29, lvii. 12 (synonymous word). Or, his gains (Caspari). The meaning is, his sin contains the germ of his ruin: 'per quod quis peccat, per idem punitur et ipse.' See further on *v.* 18.

APPENDIX ON 'JEHOVAH SABÁOTH.'

Meaning of the phrase.—(*a*) The theory which has met with the widest acceptance till recently, is that of Ewald,[1] who regards the 'hosts' as primarily the angels. According to him, the phrase arose on the occasion of some great victory, when it seemed as if the armies of Jehovah had come down to the relief of his people. He traces an allusion to this origin in Isa. xxxi. 4, and even, which seems more venturesome, in Judges v. 20. The rise of the name is traced to the close of the period of the Judges, on the ground of its evident popularity in the time of David (Ewald refers especially to Ps. xxiv. 7–10, 'the festal song with which the ark was brought to Zion'). He admits, however, (referring to Isa. xl. 26) that the phrase was in later times probably explained of the stars. The *usus loquendi* is to some extent undoubtedly in favour of this view. The angels are called 'Jehovah's hosts' in Ps. ciii. 21, cxlviii. 2 (see below), 'the host of heaven' in 1 Kings xxii. 19, Neh. ix. 6, and (a certain number of them) 'a camp of Elohim,' Gen. xxxii. 2; and in Isa. vi. 3 there may be an allusion to this meaning of 'Jehovah Sabáoth.' There is no doubt a large element of truth in this view of Ewald's.

(*b*) Herder and Schrader[2] think the 'hosts' were originally the armies of Israel, of whom Jehovah is represented as being the leader, Ex. vii. 4, xii. 41, 51; comp. Josh. v. 14. The explanation in a speech of David, 1 Sam. xvii. 45, is favourable to this view, as also is the fact that צבאות everywhere else means 'earthly armies.' 'Lord of Armies' will then be the best translation; so already Aquila, Symm., Theod., Vulg. Herder grants, however, that the meaning gradually expanded till it included first the stars, and then the whole fullness of the Divine glory in creation (comp. use of צבא in Gen. ii. 1). Schrader further remarks, that the celestial hosts of Jehovah are constantly expressed by צבא (sing.); in two places only, Ps. ciii. 21, cxlviii. 2, we find צְבָאָיו and צְבָאוֹ; but these readings, Schrader thinks, are due to a pedantic grammatical objection, the authors of the points having taken offence at the incongruity of a singular noun with a plural verb. In both places we should read צְבָאוֹ, which indeed is the K'ri reading in Ps. cxlviii. 2. To this remark Delitzsch replies, Why should not צבא have two plurals, just as צבי has both צבאים and צבאות? The received reading in the Psalms should stand. I cannot, any more than Delitzsch, accept Schrader's explanation as adequate, even admitting his view of the meaning of צ'. It is clear to me from Isa. xiii. 4 that the prophets sometimes interpreted the word with reference to non-Israelitish armies, when those were under commission, so to speak, from Jehovah. But even thus we have not expanded the meaning sufficiently.

(*c*) The original meaning of 'Sabáoth,' as critics are more and more

[1] Ewald, *Hist. of Israel*, iii. 62, Germ. ed. iii. 87; *Die Lehre der Bibel von Gott*, ii. 1, pp. 339, 340.

[2] Herder, *Vom Geist der Ebräischen Poesie*, ii. 84, 85; Schrader, *Jahrbb. für protestant. Theologie*, 1875, pp. 316–320; comp. Delitzsch, *Luther. Zeitschrift*, 1874, p. 217, &c., and note on Ps. xxiv. 10.

coming to see, is probably the stars. So Kuenen, Tiele, Baudissin, and even Delitzsch. Whence comes it, asks the latter, that the title Jehovah Sabáoth is specially characteristic of the regal period? There were armies of Israel before this; must there not be some connection with the astrolatry of the neighbouring nations (especially the Aramæans) with whom the Israelites then came into contact? The stars, too, are constantly referred to as 'the host of heaven' (Deut. iv. 19, xvii. 3, 2 Kings xvii. 16, xxi. 3, 5, xxiii. 4, 5, Isa. xxxiv. 4, Jer. viii. 2, xix. 13, xxxiii. 22, Zeph. i. 5, Dan. viii. 10, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 3, 5); in Job xxv. 3 (comp. 5) as Jehovah's 'bands'; and in Isa. xl. 26 as the 'host' which He musters. Considering that the roots of Mosaism lay in a popular, primitive Semitic religion (though its life-giving spirit came from another source); or, in other words, that the prophets did not introduce an entirely new phraseology corresponding to their new ideas, it seems most probable that when the stars were first called the hosts of God it was with the notion that they were animated creatures. In later times the belief in the angels threw the belief in the stars as animated beings into the background; the angels, however, were clearly connected very closely with the stars, as appears from Job xxv. 5 (comp. iv. 18), and especially xxxviii. 7. Comp. also Judges v. 20, Dan. viii. 10, 11, and the symbolic language of Luke x. 18, Rev. xii. 7; notice too the places of the stars between vegetables and animals in Gen. i. 16. Our own Marlowe has a similar phrase:—

> (The moon, the planets, and the meteors light,)
> These *angels* in their crystal armour fight
> A doubtful battle, &c.—*Tamburlaine*, Act V., Sc. 2.

It is only of the original meaning of the phrase that I am now speaking. In later times different writers may have used it in other senses, some thinking of the angels, others of the armies of Israel, others in all senses combined; hence LXX.'s παντοκράτωρ, in 2 Sam., 1 Chron., Minor Prophets, and eight times in Jeremiah (according to Gesenius). For the latter use, comp. the parallel phrase about Nebo quoted below.

Parallel religious phrases.—The Assyrian and Babylonian parallels are not verbally so close as might be supposed from the translations sometimes given, as *kissatu*, plur. *kissâti*, is not exactly 'a legion' (Oppert, Lenormant) in a military sense, but 'a multitude, or mass of men' (Aram. *k'nash*, collegit). Still they agree in ascribing to the supreme gods the lordship over the celestial as well as the earthly populations. Assur, for instance, is called 'the king of the multitudes of the great gods' (*Obelisk of Nimrûd*, line i.); Nebo, 'the governor of the multitudes of heaven and earth' (Syllabary quoted by Schrader); while to Marduk, the other great Babylonian deity, is ascribed the empire of 'the spirits of the multitudes of heaven and earth.'[1] The phrase 'spirits of heaven' will include the three hundred spirits, who, though not gods properly so called, were supernatural beings, and were closely attached to the stars (a similar theory to that noticed above).[2] I may add, that Sargon in his *Annals*

[1] *Jahrbb. für protestant. Theologie*, 1875, p. 340; Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 176; Boscawen, *Transactions Soc. Bibl. Arch.* 1877, p. 299.
[2] Comp. Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. 263.

(xiv. 1, Oppert's translation) says, 'I counted all the armies of the god Assur,' i.e. those of Assyria. On the parallel Persian belief in the Fravashis, see Spiegel, *Eran. Alterthümer*, ii. 94.

Construction. There are three views, (*a*) that of Gesenius: צְבָאוֹת is in the relation of a genitive to יְהוָה, comp. Aram-Naharaim, 'Aram of the two rivers,' and in Arabic 'Antar (leader) of the horsemen'; (*b*) that of Ewald: There is an ellipsis of אֱלֹהֵי; thus 'Jehovah (the God of) Hosts'; (*c*) צְבָאוֹת has become a proper name, as the translators of parts of the Sept. version evidently took it (*κύριος Σαβαώθ* constantly in Isaiah), and as in the *Sibylline Oracles*, and sometimes in (Christian) Ethiopic. The third view is that of Luzzatto (note on Isa. i. 9). He accounts for the use of Sabáoth as a name of Jehovah in the same way as for that of Elohim (plur. term.), the separate objects of heathen worship, so far as they had a real existence, being concentrated in Jehovah. Comp. אֱלֹהִים צְבָאוֹת 'Elohim Sabáoth' in Ps. lxxx. 8, 15. It is this last view which at present commends itself most to the writer, who is therefore justified in rendering, instead of Jehovah of Hosts, *Jehovah Sabáoth.*

CHAPTER II.

THERE is clearly no connection between chaps. i. and ii., whereas ii.–iv. form a continuous prophecy. There is a difference between Ewald and Delitzsch as to whether chap. v. ought to be regarded as part of the same work as chaps. ii.–iv. The moral and social state described agrees with that in the foregoing chapters, but the prediction of the judgment differs by introducing human instruments, viz. the Assyrians. Ewald's conclusion, that 'these pieces belong to one great oration' (*Prophets*, ii. 18), seems to me correct, provided it be clearly understood that chaps. ii.–iv. represent, at any rate in part, earlier discourses than chap. v. I have given a full analysis in *I. C. A.*, pp. 3, 4. Suffice it to say here, that the burden of the prophecy is the necessity of a grand vindication of God's holiness, which will lead to a realisation of Israel's destiny such as is at present impossible.

As to the date of these four chapters. Two points referred to by the prophet are of importance, (1) the taste for foreign fashions, particularly in religion; and (2) the weak character of the king. Both suggest the reign of Ahaz, who was specially fickle in religion (2 Kings xvi. 2–4, 10), whereas Uzziah and Jotham were strict worshippers of Jehovah, and who, according to vii. 1–12, was both timid and a prey to ignoble superstitions. But what part of the reign of Ahaz? From ii. 16 ('ships of Tarshish') it appears that Elath was still in the possession of Judah. Now this port was lost by Ahaz during the period of the Syro-Israelitish invasion. Hence the prophecies summed up in chaps ii.–iv., or ii.–v., must be placed either very early indeed in the reign of Ahaz, or else the prophecies of two successive periods (Jotham and Ahaz) have been fused together. See also on ix. 8–x. 4.

[1] The word which Isaiah, son of Amoz, saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. [2] 'And it shall come to pass in the after-days that the mountain of Jehovah's house shall become

[1] The heading evidently belongs to chaps. ii.–iv., or ii.–v., which are thought to have formed a separate collection of prophecies. —— **The word**] i.e., the revelation (so Jer. xviii. 18). There cannot be any special reference to the actual words of the prophecy, for it is added, 'which Isaiah *saw*' (see on i. 1).

[2-4] This passage occurs with a few variations and one additional verse in Mic. iv. 1–4. The variations look more like the original text, and the verses fit in better with the context there than in Isaiah. Micah therefore can hardly have borrowed it from Isaiah. Neither can Isaiah have borrowed it from Micah, for the prophecy to which it is attached (see Mic. iii.) was delivered in the time of Hezekiah (Jer. xxvi. 18). The force of this argument has been doubted by Del., who observes that Micah may have composed the prophecy long before he published it in Hezekiah's reign, and that Isaiah may have taken the passage from Micah's lips, though not from his book. (Similarly Caspari, *Micha*, p. 447; but see, on the other side, Kuenen, *Onderzoek*, ii. 348).—It is a minute and delicate question. My *impression* is that Mic. iv. 1–4 is not in the tone of Micah, and that *v.* 5 is a skilful attempt of that prophet to work a fragment of an older prophecy into his own work:—Isa. ii. 5 has no doubt a similar object. Both Isaiah and Micah were charged with messages of a predominantly gloomy character. Their hearers, however, were familiar with an old and truly Divine word of promise, which seemed to some inconsistent with the terrible judgment which later prophets so earnestly announced. Isaiah and Micah, prophets of a kindred spirit, have both quoted this prophecy with the view of showing its essential agreement with their own graver revelation. Similar quotations from older works occur (probably) in Isa. xv., xvi., Jer. xlix. 7–22.—It is significant that Isaiah leaves out one verse of the fragment which Micah preserves. Such an idyllic picture was out of harmony with the awful prospect before Isaiah (Duhm).

[2] **And it shall come to pass**] These words nowhere else occur at the beginning of a prophecy.—— **In the after-days**] Literally, in the sequel of the days. A much-debated phrase, which occurs here only in Isaiah, but four times in the Book of Jeremiah (xxiii. 20, xxx. 24, xlviii. 47, xlix. 39), once in Hosea (iii. 5), once in Micah (iv. 1 = Isa. ii. 2), once in Ezekiel (xxxviii. 16), once in Daniel (x. 14), and four times in the Pentateuch (Gen. xlix. 1, Num. xxiv. 14, Deut. iv. 30, xxxi. 29); in Ezek. xxxviii. 8, we have the parallel phrase 'in the sequel of the years.' The rendering adopted above is based on philological grounds. 'After,' in the term 'after-days' corresponds to a Hebrew word (*akh'rīth*), meaning—not 'end,' but—'latter part' or 'sequel,' as Bildad says in the Book of Job, 'Thy early time was a trifle, but thy latter time (thy future) shall be very great' (viii. 7). Precisely the same phrase occurs in Assyrian, and its meaning is certain from the context (*ana akhrat yumi irib*, 'for a future time I deposited.') In the Old Test. the phrase 'in the sequel of the days,' or 'in the after-days,' occurs only in prophecies—mostly (not always, as Kimchi asserts), referring to the glorious Messianic period which should ensue upon the 'day' or assize 'of Jehovah,' and so here, but sometimes used quite vaguely of future time, e.g., Jer. xxiii. 20, 'The anger of Jehovah shall not turn back, till he have executed, and till

fixed at the head of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills, and all the nations shall stream unto it. 3 And many peoples shall set forth and shall say, "Come, let us go up to the mountain of Jehovah, to the house of the God of Jacob, and let him teach us out of his ways, and we will walk in his paths." For from Zion shall go forth the instruction, and the

he have carried into effect the purposes of his heart: in future days ye shall duly consider it' (Henderson's translation); also Deut. iv. 30, xxxi. 29, where a reference to the Messianic period is excluded by the context. The rendering of A. V. 'the last days' is misleading, for the Messianic period (described in the following verses) has no 'last days'; it is without an end (ix. 7). A similar mistake occurs in the A. V. of 1 Tim. iv. 1, where *ἐν ὑστέροις καιροῖς* 'in after-times' (Alford), is rendered 'in the latter times.'——**The mountain of Jehovah's house . . .**] There is an implied contrast to Sinai, whence the earlier and more limited revelation proceeded. Mount Zion, where Jehovah's merciful presence constantly abides, is to be the centre of religious unity to the world. So much is intelligible enough, but the physical phenomenon connected with this statement seems paradoxical; and Vitringa asks, 'Quid sibi velit, et quod sub cortice lateat mysterium?' But the prophet means just what he says. It is for the spirit of revelation at each successive stage of prophecy to strip off the worn-out form received from the past, until the fulfilment shows the depth of spiritual meaning underneath the letter. It was an old belief in Eastern Asia that there was a mountain reaching from earth to heaven, on the summit of which was the dwelling of the gods (see on xiv. 13). The prophet is, perhaps, alluding to this belief, which he recognises as true in substance, though attached by the heathen to a wrong locality. At any rate, mount Zion is to be physically raised, and to **become fixed at the head** of the lower mountains, which radiate, as it were, in all directions from it. A similar physical change is anticipated for Jerusalem in Zech. xiv. 10, and for the Valley of Jehoshaphat, in connection with the 'day of Jehovah,' in Joel iii. 12. Ezekiel, too, speaks of having been transported in an ecstatic state to 'a very high mountain' (xl. 2), evidently alluding to this passage. The view adopted has the further merit of explaining a singular phrase in xi. 9 (see note). The alternative rendering 'on the top of the (piled up) mountains' (Vitr., Ew., Luzzatto, Caspari), requires to be taken in a figurative sense, and so introduces an inconsistency into the description. ——**And all the nations . . .**] This great mountain shall become their rallying-point, like the banner in xi. 10. Parallel passages, Isa. lx. 3, Jer. iii. 17, Zech. ii. 11, viii. 22, 23.

3 **Shall say, Come . . .**] Similarly Zech. viii. 20, 21.——**Let him teach us**] viz. by his prophets (called 'teachers,' xxx. 20). The revelation of the 'prophet-people,' Israel, was reserved for II Isaiah.——**Out of his ways**] God's ways here are not His dealings with man (as lv. 8), but the rules of moral and religious conduct. So *ἡ ὁδός* is used in the New Test. for Christianity viewed on its practical side, and *sabîl* 'way' in the Korân. These rules are described as a store out of which the divine teacher draws his instruction (comp. Ps. xciv. 12 Del.).——**Shall go forth the instruction**] i.e., the revelation of Divine truth shall be like a perennial stream.

word of Jehovah from Jerusalem. 4 And he shall judge between the nations, and arbitrate for many peoples: and they shall beat their swords into coulters, and their spears into pruning-knives, nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.'

5 O house of Jacob! come, let us walk in the light of Jehovah. 6 For thou hast cast off thy people, the house of Jacob, because they are replenished [a] from the East,[a] and are diviners of the clouds like the Philistines, and make con-

[a] With sorcery, Sept., Ew. (var. read.)

4 Thus Jews and Gentiles shall be united in one great spiritual empire under Jehovah. No satraps, nor Tartans, are necessary, for the nations have the full rights of citizenship (Ps. lxxxvii.), and the only precedence of Israel is that coveted by Milton for England, of 'teaching the nations how to live.'—**They shall beat their swords . . .**] The same image reversed Joel iii. (iv.) 10. Comp. also ix. 5 (4), Hos. ii. 18, Zech. ix. 10 '. . . the battle-bow shall be cut off; and he shall speak peace unto the nations.'

5 But alas! the ideal time described by the prophet is still very far off. Israel himself must first be brought into the right way. Therefore, in accents of an appealing tenderness rare with Isaiah, he exclaims, **O house of Jacob! come, let us walk** (comp. 'Come, let us go up,' *v.* 3), **in the light of Jehovah,** i.e. in the light of Jehovah's revelation. 'Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path' (Ps. cxix. 105).

6 The connection is a little difficult to trace, and it is very possible that the text is in some disorder. As the text stands, we had best explain it thus. The invitation in *v.* 5 implies that the people were at present not 'walking in the light of Jehovah'; in fact, that they had more or less completely forsaken Jehovah. But instead of continuing, 'For thou hast forsaken thy God, O house of Jacob,' the prophet expresses the corresponding fact from the point of view of revelation: **For thou** (O Jehovah) **hast cast off thy people,** and then the cause of this change in the Divine relation, **because they are replenished from the East** ('O House of Jacob' in *v.* 6 *a* is repeated to link this section with the last.) The East here undoubtedly means Aram (i.e., Syria and Mesopotamia), which in ix. 12 (comp. xi. 14), is antithetically parallel to Philistia, and in Num. xxiii. 7, parallel synonymously to 'the mountains of the East.' Intellectual culture and dress, and especially divination, may all be covered by Isaiah's phrase. The prevalence of magic in Syria is shown by the narrative of Balaam (Num. xxii.–xxiv.), and the Aramaic affinities of three of the special names for sorcerers in iii. 2, 3 confirm the accuracy of the prophet's statement. Babylonia, however, not Syria, was the earliest home of magic. The very next phrase, **diviners of the clouds,** reminds us that the clouds, both of the day and of the night, were studied by the Chaldean diviners (Lenormant, *La divination etc., chez les Chaldéens*, Paris, 1875, pp. 63, 64). Another possible rendering is cloud-makers (Del.), which reminds us of the common name of sorcerers in savage tribes, 'rain-makers.' —**Like the Philistines**] With whom the victories of Uzziah and Jotham had brought them into contact. They had a recognised order of diviners (1 Sam. vi. 2), and a

tracts with the sons of aliens. [7] And his land is become full of silver and gold, and without end are his treasures; [8] and his land is become full of horses, and without end are his chariots; [9] and his land is become full of not-gods; to the work of their hands they do homage, to that which their fingers have made. [10] [b]Therefore must the earth-born be bowed down, and the man be brought low,[b] and [c]thou canst not

[b] And the man is, &c., Ew.

famous oracle at Ekron (2 Kings i. 2).——**Make bargains with . . .**] Alluding probably (if the rendering be correct) to the commercial activity of the reigns of Uzziah and Jotham (2 Kings xiv. 22, xvi. 6). The prophets were opposed to this, because it opened the door to influences unfavourable to a pure religion. See xxiii. 17, Zeph. i. 8.

[7] **Is become full of silver and gold . . .**] Comp. the account of Hezekiah's tribute to Sennacherib on the Taylor cylinder: — '30 talents of gold, 800 talents of silver, worked metal (?), red-glittering stones . . . large precious stones, &c.' (Schrader, *K. A. T.* pp. 173, 176).

[8] **Horses . . . chariots**] The chariots were not merely for use in war, but for state, comp. 2 Sam. xv. 1; 2 Kings v. 9, 15; Eccles. x. 7 (Hitz.). The horses were first imported from Egypt by the worldly-wise Solomon (1 Kings iv. 26, x. 28, 29); hence Micah calls chariots and steeds 'the transgressions of Israel' (i. 13), and another prophet foretells that the Messianic king shall ride upon an ass (Zech. ix. 9). The statement about the chariots must be taken with the qualifications required by xxx. 1, xxxvi. 8. Ritter thinks that chariots were mostly used in Ephraim, and horses without chariots in Judah (as being more hilly), comp. Zech. ix. 10.

[9] **Not-gods**] i.e., idols. Similar complaints are made by Isaiah's contemporaries, Amos (ii. 4), Hosea (xi. 12), and Micah (i. 5, v. 13). The uniqueness of the divinity of Jehovah was their special revelation. Isaiah seems to have chosen or coined a special word (*'elîlîm*) for the dethroned idol-gods; as if he would say, They are not *êlîm* 'strong ones' = gods, but *'elîlîm* 'nonentities.' Comp. the play upon the name of Solomon's gift to Hiram (1 Kings ix. 13), 'So men called them the land of Cabul,' i.e., As-Nothing (but really 'a shut-in district').

[10] **Therefore must . . .**] By a necessity of God's moral law (this is implied in the Hebrew) comp. Ps. cix. 16–18), such open infidelity must be chastised. Whether the chastisement is past, present, or future is not expressed in the words themselves; it is the context which proves it to be future (comp. v. 15). Many of the older expositors, however, and among the moderns Ewald, take the 'bowing down' and the 'bringing low' to refer to the idolators of the preceding verse ('Thus the earth-born abaseth himself, and the man boweth low'), the transition to the judgment being formed by the second half of the verse ('And forgive them not'). The objection is (1) that the idolatrous worship has been sufficiently treated in *v.* 9, and (2) that there is no evidence that *v.* 9 *b* marks a transition—in order to do so, it should run 'And thou —forgive them not' (Naeg.).——**The earth-born**] There is probably an allusion to a plausible etymology for *ādām* 'man,' as a Latin writer might take *homo* from *humus*.——**And thou canst not forgive them.**] Why? Because

forgive them.[c] Go into the rock, and hide thee in the dust, from before the terror of Jehovah and from his excellent majesty. [11] The haughty eyes of the earth-born must be brought low, and the loftiness of men bowed down, and Jehovah alone be exalted in that day.

[12] For a day hath Jehovah Sabáoth upon all that is proud and lofty, and upon all that is raised up that it may be brought low; [13] and upon all cedars of Lebanon that are lofty and raised up, and upon all the oaks of Bashan; [14] and upon all the lofty mountains, and upon all the

[c] Lit. forgive them not.

theirs is a 'sin unto death' (comp. xxii. 14). 'Forgive me my foul murder? That cannot be' (*Hamlet*, act iii. sc. 3).

A brief pause must be supposed here, after which the divine Judge is seen approaching, accompanied by the earthquake and the storm (*v.* 25; comp. Mic. i. 4, Hab. iii.) Obs. nothing is said as yet of the Assyrians.——**Go into the rock**] Similarly Hosea x. 8, Rev. vi. 16. The limestone caverns of Palestine were frequently used as strongholds and hiding-places, Judges vi. 2, xv. 8, 1 Sam. xiii. 6, xiv. 11, xxiv. 3 (especially), 1 Kings xviii. 13.

[11] **Alone shall be exalted**] 'Alone shall stand a high and safe asylum (as the word means); like an impregnable rock-fortress (comp. Ps. xlvi. 7, 11)' Dr. Kay.

[12] **For a day hath . . .**] 'A day' for displaying his power in wrath and in mercy (see on xiii. 6), hence followed by 'upon.' 'Hath it,' viz. in readiness—every day has a kind of pre-existence in the supersensible world (Job iii. 1–10). It is the world's judgment-day which is here referred to, one act of which is the judgment upon Jerusalem, see on chap. xxiv. The same form of phrase in xxii. 5, xxxiv. 8.——**Proud and lofty**] The ideas of eminence, pride, and opposition to Jehovah melt into each other in the Old Test.; comp. Job xl. 11, 12, Gen. iii. 22.

[13] **Upon all cedars of Lebanon . . .**] It has been asked whether the various items of the following description are to be taken literally or figuratively. They must be all taken in the same way; there is nothing to indicate a distinction (made by Calvin and Hitzig) between *vv.* 13, 14, and the rest of the passage. The mention of artificial as well as natural objects pleads strongly in favour of a literal interpretation; only we must not suppose the judgment of Jehovah to be confined to the objects here specified. We have before us nothing less than the germ of the prophecy of the 'regeneration' of nature (Matt. xix. 28), which, though probably affected in some of its Jewish and Judæo-Christian expressions by the analogous Persian belief, is in idea an essential part of the old prophetic teaching. Actual nature has become too closely wedded to man's sinful pride to be suitable for the regenerate people of the glorified theocracy. The forests of Lebanon and Bashan tempted Solomon and Uzziah to build those palaces and towers which corrupted the simplicity of Israelitish faith. They are therefore to be taken as representatives of the condemned features of the existing order of things, just as towers are taken in xxx. 23.

[14] **Mountains . . . hills**] Comp. Korān, Sur. xx. 105–6 (Rodwell), 'and they will ask thee of the mountains: SAY: scattering my Lord will

upraised hills; [15] and upon every high tower, and upon every fortified wall; [16] and upon all ships of Tarshish, and upon all delightful works of imagery; [17] and the highness of the earth-born shall be bowed down, and the loftiness of men brought low, and Jehovah alone shall be exalted in that day. [18] And the not-gods—the whole shall pass away. [19] And men shall go into caverns of rocks and holes of the ground, from before the terror of Jehovah and from his excellent majesty, when he shall arise to shock the earth. [20] In that day shall a man cast his not-gods of silver and his not-gods of gold, which were made for him to worship, to the moles and to the bats, [21] in order to go into the clefts of the rocks, and into the rents of the crags, from before the terror of Jehovah and from his excellent majesty, when he shall arise to shock the earth.

[22] [d] O cease ye from man, in whose nostrils is a breath; for at how much is he to be valued? [d]

[d] Omitted in Sept., and (as late marginal note) by Diestel and Studer.

scatter them in dust; And he will leave them a level plain: thou shalt see in it no hollows or jutting hills.' Mohammed is speaking of the Day of Resurrection.

[15] **High tower**] Referring to the buildings of Uzziah and Jotham, 2 Chron. xxvi. 9, 10, xxvii. 3, 4. Comp. Hosea viii. 14, Mic. v. 11.

[16] **Ships of Tarshish**] Deep sea ships, such as were built for the foreign trade, especially with Tartessus and Ophir (1 Kings xxii. 48). At this time, then, the Jews still possessed a fleet, the station of which was at Elath, on the Red Sea. In the reign of Ahaz the Arameans 'recovered Elath for Edom' (2 Kings xvi. 6 *Q. P. B.*, compare xiv. 22).——**Delightful works of imagery**] Such as the merchant-ships brought from far countries. See crit. note.

[18] **And the not-gods . . .**] A verse of three words in the Hebrew, suggestive of a swift and sudden catastrophe.

[19] **To shock the earth**] A thoroughly Isaianic paronomasia—'ut terreat terram.' So in Ps. x. 18.

[20] **Shall a man cast . . .**] Or, shall (the whole tribe of them) cast (Dr. Weir). [Like an African fetish-worshipper, disappointed of some desired good. It is remarkable that neither here nor in the partly parallel passages, xxx. 22, xxxi. 7, does Isaiah say anything against the high places or local sanctuaries: it is only idolatry against which he thunders. Nor, in fact, do Amos, Hosea, or Micah—at least so far as Judah is concerned. In Mic. i. 5 we should certainly, I think, read not 'high places' but 'sin,' see *Q. P. B.*; 'high places' is a gloss from Hosea x. 8.——**Which were made**] For a very different purpose. Lit. 'which they made,' viz. the manufacturers of idols.

[22] **In whose nostrils is a breath**] 'Jehovah Elohim . . . breathed into his nostrils breath of life' (Gen. ii. 7). This verse connects very badly with what precedes. 'Cease ye from idols' would be a much more natural exhortation. The style, too, is very inferior. Omit the verse, and the effect of the sequel is enhanced. We then have a strik-

CHAPTER III.

HAVING established the certainty of a judgment, the prophet goes on to describe it in detail. Probably we have here a summary of a fresh series of discourses. At *v.* 16 it is probable that the summary becomes a little fragmentary, for the introductory formula is elsewhere confined to cases in which Jehovah in person is the speaker. This is not the case here. The unusually lax application of the formula suggests that here, as in chap. ii., a later editor has been at work, and that the formula is merely inserted to bridge over a lacuna in the notes. Still the position of iii. 16–24 is not at all unsuitable. There are clearly points of contact in it with what precedes. Haughtiness and luxury are rebuked in chap. ii., and the prominence given to the women is in harmony with the feminine form of the word 'staff' (see on *v.* 1), and with the statement respecting the women in *v.* 12.—At *v.* 25 there is an abrupt transition from the fate of the women to that of Zion as a whole.

[1] For behold, the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, taketh away from Jerusalem and from Judah stay and staff, [a][every stay of bread, and every stay of water][a]; [2] hero and warrior, judge and

[a] Omitted as gloss by Hitz. and Knobel.

ing transition from the general description of the effects of the day of Jehovah to the special details connected with Jerusalem: the captivity of Jerusalem becomes the earnest of the overthrow of all 'proud and lofty' things. The tone of *v.* 22 reminds us of the post-exile period. Comp. Ps. cxlvi. 3, 4 (in a Psalm of Haggai and Zechariah, according to Sept.).

[1] **For behold, the Lord . . .**] Notice the solemnity of the introduction. Comp. i. 24, x. 16, 33, xix. 4.——**Removeth . . .**] i.e., mediately, through war and captivity.——**Stay and staff**] i.e., all those classes and orders mentioned in *vv.* 2, 3, on which the outward and inward life of the community depends (ch. xix. 10; 'the pillars' = the nobles). 'Staff' in the Heb. is the feminine form of 'stay' (cf. Mic. ii. 4, Nah. ii. 11, Del.). Observe the importance still enjoyed by women among the Israelites, though less now than in the 'patriarchal' period.——[**Every stay of bread . . .**] It would be strange if the prophet used the same phrases in parallel members of the verse in totally different senses. If the classes referred to in *vv.* 2, 3 were merely those of bread-winners, the productive classes as we call them, the second interpretation might perhaps pass. But with the exception probably of the last but one, it is not bread-winning but valour and wisdom which characterise these classes. It is probably one of those marginal glosses which the scribes and editors of the prophecies inserted during or after the exile (see any critical edition of Jeremiah). Inattentive to the context, a scribe interpreted 'stay and staff' by the light of the phrases, 'staff of bread' (Ps. cv. 16, Ezek. iv. 16, v. 16, Lev. xxvi. 26), and 'to stay the heart with bread' (Gen. xviii. 5, Ps. civ. 15).

[2] First in order among the props of the state came the warriors. The prophet puts himself at the popular or unbelieving point of view. Then comes a medley of different offices. Obs., in the mention of the *elder*, how the idea of the family still governs the social organisation.

prophet, and soothsayer and elder; [3] the captain of fifty and the man of repute, and the counsellor and the skilful [b] artificer, and the expert enchanter. [4] And I will make youths to be their princes, and with wilfulness shall they rule over them. [5] And the people shall oppress one another, man against man, and neighbour against neighbour; they shall behave boisterously, the child towards the old man, and the mean man towards the honourable. [6] When a man shall take hold of his brother in his father's house, 'Thou hast clothing, thou shalt be our judge, and let this ruin be under thy hand:' [7] he shall

[b] Magician, Ew., Weir.

The 'elders' were originally heads of families, and have their analogue in the council of the Aryan village communities (comp. Sir H. Maine). References to their parliamentary status (if the phrase may be used) occur in Ex. iii. 16, 2 Sam. xix. 11, 1 Kings viii. 1, xx. 7. The institution lingered on during and after the Babylonian exile, Jer. xxix. 1, Ezek. xiv. 1, xx. 1, Ezra v. 5, vi. 7, x. 14; Matt. xxvi. 3, 47, Mark xiv. 43, Acts iv. 5, &c. In *v.* 14 (see note) they are referred to as 'princes' or 'principal men'; they are also included under the term 'counsellor' in *v.* 2.——**Prophet and soothsayer** are classed together, like 'mighty man and man of war'; they are nearly the same in meaning, at any rate from the point of view which the prophet here assumes. So Jer. xxix. 8; cf. Mic. iii. 11, Ezek. xxii. 28. It does not appear that the prophets denied the reality of magical powers, though they did assert that the use of them without the direction and assistance of Jehovah was an act of rebellion against the God of gods (see further on vii. 11). Nor does Isaiah appear to have denied the prophetic character to those who held lower views of the Divine nature. He classes the degenerate prophets with the degenerate priests, and upbraids the former because, when they might have prophesied 'right things,' they uttered 'deceits' (xxx. 10). Jeremiah, however, has had it fully revealed to him that there are false prophets (xxiii. 25-32), though the invention of the phrase, 'false prophet,' is due to the Sept. (e.g. xxxiii. 1-16 Sept.)

[3] **Captain of fifty**] The leader of the smallest division of the army (2 Kings i. 9).——**Skilful artificer**] Artizans are particularly mentioned as sharing the captivity of Jehoiachin, 2 Kings xxiv. 14, Jer. xxiv. 1. Alt. rendering is no doubt plausible. (Ps. lviii. 6, Hebr.) Magic formulæ were highly developed in the Semitic East. Still, we have already two designations of soothsayers, and we can hardly spare the artificers, on whom so much depended in times of war (for machines) as well as of peace.

[4-7] Thus deprived of its ἄριστοι, Judah will become a prey to an anarchy such as had already befallen Israel.——**Youths their princes**] Only youths would desire such a miserable kingdom; and their childish capriciousness would contribute to the general misery. A specimen of the latter was given by Ahaz (see on *v.* 12), and after him by Manasseh (king at 12).

[6] The distress shall be so great that any one who is still possessed of a respectable outer garment shall be importuned to accept the government, and shall protest against the dubious honour.——**In his father's house**] Where brothers would

lift up (his voice) on that day, saying, 'I will not be a binder-up, for in my house is neither bread nor clothing; ye shall not appoint me to be a judge of the people.'

[8] For Jerusalem is sunk into ruin, and Judah is fallen, because their tongue and their deeds have been against Jehovah, to defy the eyes of his glory. [9] [c] Observation of their face witnesseth against them, and their sin they have declared like Sodom, undisguisedly: alas for themselves, for they have achieved for themselves misfortune. [10] Say ye of the righteous that it is well, for the fruit of their deeds they shall eat. [11] Alas for the wicked! Ill! for the achievement of his hands shall be given him. [12] My people—his governor is a wilful child, and women rule over him: my people—thy guides are misleading, and the way of thy paths they have swallowed up. [13] Jehovah is stationed to plead, and standeth to judge the

[c] So Ges., Weir, Naeg.—The expression, Del.

naturally meet, opposed to 'my house' afterwards.—**A binder-up**] One to hold together the fragments of the state; comp. xxx. 26, 'bindeth up the breach of his people;' or, a binder-up of wounds, a surgeon.

[8] The prophet now justifies the foregoing gloomy description. He speaks of Judah, chiefly as represented by the ruling classes.—**Hath come to ruin**] The perfect of prophetic certainty.—**Their tongue**] i.e., their language. Obs. the importance attached to words as revelations of character, both in O. and N. T., lviii. 9, 13, Ps. xciv. 4, Matt. v. 22, xii. 36, 37.—**The eyes of his glory**] Jehovah's glory is the outward manifestation of his invisible essence. Through this glory he enters into relation with the world, which is described, anthropomorphically, as 'looking out upon the children of men.'

[9] **Observation of their face**] Their character may be read by a keen glance at their face. Alt. rend. is rather too distant from the primary meaning of the Hebrew, but the difference is unimportant.—**Sodom**] An example of shamelessness, Gen. xix. 5.

[10, 11] Observe the strictness of the parallelism in these verses. In this point, and also in their contexts, they remind us of i. 19, 20. They assert the doctrine of 'future rewards and punishments' in a spiritual and not a mechanical sense. Good deeds ripen into happiness, as evil deeds into misery. Comp. Ps. lviii. 11 *Q. P. B.*

[12] **His governor is a wilful child**] Isaiah means a child in character rather than in age, for Ahaz was probably twenty-five (i.e., five years older than Solomon, Ewald, iii. 208; comp. iv. 167) when he came to the throne. His timidity was shown in the Syro-Israelitish invasion (vii. 2, 2 Kings xvi. 5, 7); his effeminacy appears from the next clause of this verse, and his hankering for novelties from 2 Kings xvi. 10.—**Thy guides . . .**] Lit. 'thy righteners,' those who should lead thee in the right way, a duty commended to the ruling class in i. 23. A delicate irony! So ix. 16.—**Swallowed up**] i.e., effaced. Similarly xxv. 7, 8.

[13] No effect has been produced by the friendly pleadings of the prophet. Now the scene changes. Jehovah **standeth to plead** judi-

peoples. [14] Jehovah will enter into judgment with the elders of his people, and its princes: 'So then ye have eaten up the vineyards, the plunder of the afflicted is in your houses. [15] What mean ye that ye crush my people, and grind the face of the afflicted?' Oracle of the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth.

[16] And Jehovah said, Because the daughters of Zion are proud, and go with outstretched throat and ogling eyes—go

cially. The same phrase is used in the same sense in Ps. lxxxii. 1, though critics doubt whether the objects of the judgment are human or superhuman beings. Elsewhere we read that Jehovah 'sitteth (i.e., on his heavenly throne) to judge' (Joel iii. 12, Ps. ix. 4). Here the figure is different. Jehovah stands in a menacing attitude ready to hurl his bolt; whether in heaven or on earth (comp. Mic. i. 2) the prophet does not say.——**The peoples**] Jehovah has revealed himself as the God, and consequently as the Judge, of all the nations of the world. But Isaiah merely hints at this, and devotes himself rather to the case of Jerusalem, which has such grievous need of purification, before the 'many nations' can go up thither for spiritual teaching. We might express the relation between *vv.* 13, 14 thus: 'Jehovah, when setting himself to judge the world, shall first enter into the case of the princes of his chosen people Israel' (Roorda ap. Drechsler).

[14] **Elders . . . princes**] See on *v.* 2. From Ex. xviii. 13–26 it appears that the 'elders' originally performed judicial functions.——**So then ye . . .**] The prophets skips over the examination of the witnesses, and gives only the latter part of the summing up of the judge. 'Ye' is emphatic. *Ye*, from whom such different conduct was to be expected, have 'eaten up the vineyard' (see v. 7). 'He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye,' is Jehovah's word elsewhere (Zech. ii. 8).

[15] **Grind the face**] Isaiah uses the strongest of metaphors to describe the cruel injustice of which the poor were the subjects. Its opposite is 'to smoothe the face,' i.e. to flatter or court (Ps. xlv. 12 A. V.). A similar metaphorical passage in Mic. iii. 2, 3.

[16] **And Jehovah said**] Here a new discourse begins, which these words loosely connect with the foregoing prophecy (see Introd.). It concerns the ladies of Jerusalem (comp. xxxii. 9–12), whose love of dress, expressing their inward pride, is threatened with condign punishment. Twenty-one articles are mentioned, and the difficulty of explaining all the names from the Hebrew shows that this toilette-luxury was not of native origin; comp. Zeph. i. 8: 'all such as are clothed with *foreign* clothing.' To judge from the names we should suspect Syrian and Arabian influences, though it must be admitted that modern Arabic names of clothing do not at all correspond; nor has any light as yet been derived from the Assyrian. Quantity, it is evident, was as much sought after as quality by the fashionable ladies of Jerusalem. Rings and chains, head-dresses and veils, upper and under garments, occur in a profusion which it is difficult to represent. All this was doubtless alien to primitive simplicity, though Judges v. 30 warns us that the deflection from simplicity began long before Isaiah.—There is a somewhat parallel passage in the Korān (Sura xxiv. 31) beginning with the words, 'And speak to the believing women that they refrain their eyes, and observe continence,' and ending 'And let them not strike their feet together, &c.' (referred to by Drechsler). Comp. also the tirade of Sacchetti, the Italian novelist,

tripping along and tinkling with their feet: [17] therefore the Lord will smite with a scab the crown of the head of the daughters of Zion, and Jehovah will make bare their secret parts. [18] In that day the Lord will take away the finery of the anklets, the [d] wreaths and the crescents; [19] the ear-drops and the arm-chains and the fine veils; [20] the diadems and the stepping-chains and the girdles; and the scent-bottles and the amulets; [21] the seal-rings and the nose-rings; [22] the state-dresses and the tunics, and the wrappers and the purses; [23] the [e] mirrors, and the linen shifts and the turbans and the

[d] Gauzes, Ew.

[e] Little suns, Ew., Naeg.

against the fashions of the Florentine women of the fourteenth century (he mentions *inter alia*, feet-chains), by which Longfellow illustrates the prophetic denunciation of Dante, *Purgat.*, xxiii. 106–111.—The only monographs on the Israelitish toilette are still those of Schröder and Hartmann, the one entitled *Commentatio philologico-critica de vestitu mulierum Hebræarum* (Lugd. Bat. 1745); the other, *Die Hebräerin am Putztische und als Braut* (3 vols. Amsterd. 1809). Part of the latter has been reproduced in a popular form by De Quincey (*Works*, vol. xi.)—Ewald thinks there is a method in the order of the catalogue; first the ornaments of the feet, then those of the head, then (*vv.* 22, 23) the larger dresses; but this requires some violence to carry it out.——**Tripping . . . and tinkling**] 'The melodious chime of little silver ankle-bells, keeping time with the motions of the feet, made an accompaniment so agreeable to female vanity, that the stately daughters of Jerusalem, with their sweeping trains flowing after them, appear to have adopted a sort of measured tread, by way of impressing a regular cadence upon the music of their feet' (De Quincey, xi. 123).

[18] **The anklets**] i.e., rings of silver or some other metal worn round the ankles; hence the verb rendered 'tinkling' in *v.* 16.——**Wreaths**] Explained in the Talmud of a wreath worn round the forehead, from one ear to the other (Buxtorf). LXX. τὰ ἐμπλόκια. Alt. rend. is also plausible, but involves comparison of the Arabic ('wreath' is from the Aramaic).——**Crescents**] Lit. little moons. These were hung upon the neck, Judg. viii. 21, 26 (Midianitish). Originally, perhaps, talismans. They still find a place in the Arab toilette.

[19] **Ear-drops**] See Judges viii. 26 (Midianitish).

[20] **Diadems**] The word used for the tiaras of priests, Ex. xxxix. 28; of bridegrooms, lxi. 10.——**Stepping-chains**], connecting the anklets, and so enabling their wearers to go 'tripping along' (*v.* 16).——**Girdles**] Costly girdles such as brides wore, Jer. ii. 32, comp. Isa. xlix. 18.

[21] **Seal-rings**] Worn on the finger (Jer. xxii. 24). Levy's monograph (*Siegel und Gemmen*, Breslau, 1869), includes an account of extant seals and gems in ancient pre-exile Hebrew.

[22] **State-dresses**] Named in Hebr. from their being put off when the occasion for their use was over. In Zech. iii. 4 the word is used of the splendid high-priestly robes.——**Tunics**] i.e., the uppermost of the two under-dresses, richly embroidered, and bound with a superb girdle.——**Wrappers**] such as Ruth put on over her best clothes when she went to Boaz (Ruth iii. 15).

[23] **Mirrors**] i.e., hand-mirrors,

large veils. 24 And it shall come to pass: instead of perfume there shall be rottenness; and instead of a girdle, a rope; and instead of artificial curls, baldness; and instead of a mantle, a girding of sackcloth, a brand instead of beauty. 25 Thy people shall fall by the sword, and thy forces in war. 26 And her gates shall sigh and lament, and she shall be emptied, sitting upon the ground. IV. 1 And seven women shall take hold of one man in that day, saying, 'Our own bread will we eat, and our own clothing will we wear: only let us be called by thy name; take away our disgrace.'

CHAPTER IV. 2 ETC.

2–6. A short section full of glorious promises. Why so short? Because the proper subject of the discourse to which this section belongs is not promise but threatening. The two passages which have a different scope (ii. 2-4, and iv. 2–6) are evidently inserted to relieve the dark tints of the picture. They describe the fair future of the purified Jerusalem, the one from without, the other chiefly from within.

2 In that day shall the [a] growth of Jehovah be for beauty

[a] Sprout, Ew., Del.

made of polished metal (probably copper), plates, comp. Ex. xxxviii. 8, Job xxxvii. 18, and the commentators on 1 Cor. xiii. 12. Glass indeed was not unknown (Job xxviii. 17, 'gold and *glass*'). Bottles and vases of that material have been found both at Nimrūd and at Khorsabad (Layard's *Discoveries*, 195-6), while in Egypt glass-blowing was known at least as early as the reign of the first Osirtasen (Wilkinson, iii. 88).——**Large veils**] Comp. Cant. v. 7.

23, 26 **Thy people . . . her gates**] referring to Zion.

IV. 1 **Seven women . . .**] 'A companion picture to iii. 6, where the surviving men lay hold on one who has bread and clothing to make him their kaḍi. The male population are in search of a ruler; the women in search of a husband' (Dr. Weir).——**Our disgrace**] The disgrace of being childless (Gen. xxx. 23). Immortality being regarded as a family, not a personal, privilege.

2 **In that day**] That is, after this destruction, says Alexander, with most of the commentators. This, however, is a superficial view. It will be observed that the phrase has been used five times since 'the day of Jehovah' was first mentioned in ii. 12, and in very different contexts. Hitherto it has pointed to some feature in the divine punishment of the sinners, but now it refers to the mercies of the saved. How can we account for this diversity of scope? Only on the theory, forced upon us by a wide examination of prophecy, that the contents of the prophetic revelations of the Messianic period are unconditioned by time (comp. 2 Pet. iii. 8). It is not a series of successive events which is unfolded before us, but rather processes which may in fact

and honour, and the fruitage of the land for a pride and adornment unto the escaped of Israel. 3 And it shall come

be going on simultaneously, though one may be more prominent at one time and another at another. The punishment of the sinners and the mercies of the saved are different aspects of one and the same eternal purpose of God.——**The growth of Jehovah . . . the fruitage of the land**] 'And Jehovah their God shall deliver them in that day as the flock of his people. . . . For how great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! corn shall make the young men stalwart, and new wine the virgins;' Zech. ix. 16, 17. 'And I will raise up unto them a plantation as (a matter for) renown, and they shall no more be consumed with hunger in the land;' Ezek. xxxiv. 29. These two passages may serve to dissipate two objections which may be urged against the above rendering. First, it may be said, that a reference to the natural products of Canaan strikes a jarring note in the prophecy. But it equally seems to jar in Zechariah, and yet all interpreters admit the necessity of it. The truth is that a heightened fertility of the soil is one of the most frequently recurring Messianic features—see, besides the above passages, Isa. xxx. 23, Am. ix. 13, Hos. ii. 21, 22, Joel iii. 18. It may be objected, secondly, that such a reference lacks any point of contact with the foregoing and the following prophecy (for few will agree with Ewald and Hofmann that there is a contrast suggested between the natural beauty of the divine gifts and the artificial luxuries of the Hebrew women). The answer is, that we have here only an imperfect summary of Isaiah's discourses. In all probability, *v.* 2. is merely a condensed abstract of a long section, and what that section contained may be guessed from the passage quoted from Ezekiel. The idea of it probably was that the supernatural fertility suddenly granted to the soil should prevent any evil consequences from the previous desolation of the land of Judah.

I have still to justify my explanation of these two expressions on phraseological grounds. 1. The two expressions in the Hebr. are clearly parallel; they may of course be either synonymous or antithetical; but considering that exactly the same quality is predicated of each of them, it is more natural to suppose them to be synonymous, or nearly so. 2. The fact that the context is entirely connected with the land of Judah shows that we must render the Hebr. *ha-areç* 'the land,' and not 'the earth.' Now the phrase, 'fruit of the land,' and the synonymous one, 'fruit of the ground,' occurs twelve times in the O. T., and always with reference to vegetation. 3. The Hebr. *çemakh*, though singular, is almost always used collectively. See especially lxi. 11 and Gen. xix. 25. The exceptions are Jer. xxiii. 5, xxxiii. 15 (though even here Graf and Kuenen take *çemakh* collectively); and Zech. iii. 8, vi. 12. It must be observed, however, that in Jer. the phrase is 'Plant (A. V. branch) of David.' This is clear, and therefore allowable; 'plant of Jehovah' is not clear—indeed, it would almost infallibly be misunderstood, with such a phrase as 'fruit of the land' in the parallel line. The only clear rendering is 'plantation (= plants) of Jehovah,' for which comp. Ps. civ. 16. 'The trees of Jehovah are satisfied (with rain); the cedars of Lebanon which he hath planted.' [Ew. and Del. both render 'Sprout of Jehovah,' but the former explains this collectively = 'products,' the latter personally of the Messiah. Del. fully admits that 'fruit of the land' must be taken as synonymous with this, and therefore explains 'fruit' as a personal designation, for which he comps. Ezek. xvii. 5; 'he took

to pass: he who is left in Zion, and remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, everyone who is written down for life in Jerusalem, [4] when the Lord shall have washed off the filth of the daughters of Zion, and cleansed the blood of Jerusalem from her midst by a blast of judgment and a blast of extermination. [5] And Jehovah shall create upon the whole site of mount Zion, and upon her sacred assemblies, a cloud by

of the seed of the land (i.e., Zedekiah) and planted it in a fruitful field.' But I would ask, Could Zedekiah have been called 'seed of the land' except in a detailed allegory? Calvin interprets literally as above, but thinks that the unwonted temporal blessings are types of spiritual ones, comp. xlv. 8. But there is nothing to indicate this in our passage. So too H. Schultz, *Alttest. Theologie*, ii. 244. Naeg.'s view is too farfetched to quote. Lagarde, *Semitica*, I. 8, if I understand his confused exposition rightly, distinguishes between the supernaturally given *çemakh* and the natural population, and compares the Talmudic phrase 'field of Baal' = 'field nourished by rain.' But the opposite of this in the Talmud is—not 'fruit of the land'—but 'field of fountains,' i.e., irrigated land.]

[3] The character of the surviving citizens of Jerusalem shall be in harmony with their outward prosperity.——**Shall be called**] A name, according to the primitive belief, being a symbol of character, and almost a part of personality. In the Messianic period, this primitive belief will be uniformly verified by facts (xxxii. 5).——**Holy**] i.e., free from the contaminations of sin (see *v.* 4), with the collateral idea of inviolability, comp. vi. 13, Ps. xciii. 5.——**Written down for life**] Their survival, then, was no mere accident, but *predestined*. The belief in predestination, observes Ewald, was a 'powerful lever' of Hebrew prophecy (*Glaubenslehre*, ii. 208.) For the 'book of Jehovah,' or 'the book of life,' comp. Ex. xxxii. 32, Ps. lvi. 8, lxix. 28, Mal. iii. 16, Dan. xii. 1, Phil. iv. 3, Rev. xiii. 8, xxi. 27.

[4] **When the Lord . . .**] This is to be connected with *v.* 5; it supplies the conditions on which the fulfilment of the promise depends.——**The filth**] i.e., the moral defilement.——**The bloodshed**] refers chiefly to judicial murders (i. 15), but also perhaps to sacrifices of children to Moloch. 'And they shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan; and the land was polluted with blood' (Ps. cvi. 38; comp. Isa. lvii. 5, Ezek. xxii. 2, 3).——**A blast of judgment**] i.e., of punishment for the wicked. The same Hebrew phrase in xxviii. 6 means '*spirit* of judgment.' The meaning 'blast,' however, is required here by the context, 'judgment' being synonymously parallel to 'extermination.' It is indeed still the Divine energy, but being exercised in the physical and not the moral sphere, the rendering 'spirit' is inappropriate. Comp. xxx. 27, where 'lips' and a 'tongue' are spoken of; also xi. 4 (end).——**Extermination**] A common expression for the putting away of idolatry from the theocratic community; Deut. xiii. 5 (6), xvii. 7, &c.

[5] God's felt presence, the pledge of Zion's security. The sign of this presence shall be some new and special exhibition of the Divine power, hence the statement, **Jehovah shall create**:—'Nam verbum creandi, quo hic usus est Esaias, indicat ipsissimum esse Dei opus, non hominum (Musculus).'——**Upon the whole site . . .**] Strictly, upon

day, and smoke with the brilliance of a flaming fire by night. For upon all (the) glory a [b]canopy . . . . [6] And it shall be a pavilion for shade [by day] from the heat, and for a refuge and for a shelter from storm and from rain.

[b] Is (or, shall be) a canopy, Ew., Del. (See below.)

CHAPTER V.

ISRAEL'S ripeness for judgment, expressed first under the veil of a parable, then in a list of the national sins, to which the corresponding punishments are specified. The chapter bears evident marks of artistic arrangement. Ewald, who on very plausible grounds attaches parts of chaps. ix. and x. to it, proposes to distribute it thus,—Introduction, *vv.* 1–7 : section I, *vv.* 8–10, 17 ; II. 11–16 ; III. 18–24. He makes a fresh discourse begin at v. 25, 26 (the Introduction), after which follows ix. 8–12 (section I.), 13–17 (section II.), 18–21 (section III.), x. 1–4 (section IV.), and as a finale *vv.* 26–30.

[1] Come, let me sing about my friend, [a]a love-song [a] about his vineyard. A vineyard had my friend On [b]a richly fruit-

[a] Lit. a song of love, Lowth, who supposes the sign of abbreviation to have been overlooked. Heb. text has, a song of my friend.

every (part of the) site. 'Site' almost = sanctuary ; the word *mākōm* almost always means the Divine dwelling-place (similarly the cognate Arabic word).——**A cloud by day . . .**] The first of a long series of references to the Exodus (see Ex. xiii. 21, 22). The powers of the world will be as impotent for harm as the Egyptians were at the Exodus.——**Upon all (the) glory . . .**] The phrase is so abrupt as to be hardly explicable ; have not some words fallen out? Dr. Weir remarks : 'There is an evident contrast between the true glory (that of Jehovah and that which he gives) and all false glory. Over the glory which is not of Jehovah—such as that described in chap. ii.—there is no covering. It cannot endure. It speedily fades. But over the glory of Jehovah and his redeemed there is a covering.' This is a worthy meaning, I admit (comp. xxiv. 23 end), but rather divined from the context, than unfolded from the five Hebrew words.

[6] **It** (Zion) **shall be a pavilion . . .**] Comp. Ps. xxvii. 5, xxxi. 20. 'There shall be protection not only against greater evils, but even against lesser inconvenience : so perfect shall be the happiness of God's people in those days ; comp. xlix. 10' (Dr. Weir). 'By day' seems to me to have intruded by a clerical error from the preceding verse ; otherwise we should have a corresponding 'by night' in the next line.

[1, 2] The parable takes the form of a song, which from its melody and its dancing rhythm might well be a drinking-song, did not the bitter irony of the close dispel the illusion.——**My friend**] i.e., Jehovah. Comp. the proper names David (i.e., friend, viz. of Jehovah), Jedidiah, 'beloved of Jehovah.'

ful height,[b] And he digged it over, and cleared it of stones, And planted it with choice vines, And built a tower in its midst, Yea, and hewed out a wine-vat therein, And he hoped for it to bear grapes, But it bore wild grapes.

[3] And now, O inhabitants of Jerusalem and men of Judah: judge, I pray, between me and my vineyard. [4] What is there still to be done to my vineyard which I have not done in it? why, when I hoped for it to bring forth grapes, brought it forth wild grapes? [5] And now, let me tell you, I pray, what I will do to my vineyard: take away its hedge, that it become grazing-land; break down its wall, that it serve for trampling upon: [6] and I will make an end of it, it shall neither be pruned nor hoed, and shall grow up in thorns and briars; and to the clouds I will give a charge that they rain no rain upon it. [7] For the vineyard of Jehovah Sabáoth is the house of Israel, and the men of Judah his darling plantation; and he hoped for justice, but behold bloodshed, for righteousness, but behold a cry.

[b] Lit. a horn, the son of fatness.

——**A lovely song**] By this reading 'we avoid the great impropriety of making the author of the song, and the person to whom it is addressed, to be the same' (Lowth). ——**Height**] Lit. horn; an expression, common in Arabic for a small isolated eminence. Comp. the famous Ḳurún Haṭṭin (horns of Haṭṭin), the scene of Saladin's victory over the last Crusaders; also, perhaps, Ashteroth-Ḳarnaim (Gen. xiv. 5).

[2] See the striking parallel in the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. xxi. 33–41, &c.), and the allusion in Ezra ix. 9, end.——**Choice vines**] Same word as in Jer. ii. 21: 'Yet I had planted thee a noble vine' (A. V.); other forms in xvi. 8, Gen. xlix. 11. The deep red colour of the grapes was the origin of the name in Hebr. ——**Tower**] i.e., a watch-tower; see on *v.* 5.

[3] *The application.* The prophet loses himself in the thought of his Divine sender. He first calls upon his hearers to act as arbitrators; but they are condemned (see *v.* 5), by their evil conscience (comp. Luke xx. 16), and listen silently to their sentence, viz. that the vineyard be left to itself, without any fostering care, either from earth or from heaven. For heaven, too, is concerned, the mention of the clouds in *v.* 6 preparing the way for the solemn statement in *v.* 7. The picture can still be recognised as drawn to the life. Southern Palestine, especially 'the bare slopes of Hebron, of Bethlehem, and of Olivet,' abounds in enclosures of loose stone, each with a square grey tower at the corner (Stanley, *Sinai and Pal.*, 1st ed., p. 413).——**And he hoped . . .**] The assonances of the following words in the Hebr. are inimitable.

[7] **Bloodshed**] Lit. shedding. Some have objected to this rend., because murder is not expressly mentioned in the subsequent complaints. But chap. V. cannot be treated of by itself. The developments are new, but the fundamental ideas are those of chaps. i.–iv. Now murder is certainly a preva-

[8] Woe unto those who join house to house, who add field to field, till there is no room left, and ye are made to dwell alone within the land. [9] In mine ears Jehovah Sabáoth [hath spoken concerning them]: Surely many houses shall become a desolation; great ones and fair without inhabitants. [10] For ten days' work of vineyard shall yield one bath, and the seed of a homer shall yield an ephah. [11] Woe unto those who rise up early to follow strong drink; who sit long in the twilight, the wine inflaming them; [12] and lute and cymbal, timbrel and

lent sin, according to these chapters (i. 15, 21, iv. 4), not to mention that 'laying field to field' sometimes involved bloodshed (1 Kings xxi.)——**A cry**] either from the blood of the murdered, according to the striking symbolic language of Gen. iv. 10, Job xvi. 18, or from the oppressed (James v. 4).

[8] Here begins the evidence of Israel's criminality before Jehovah. One by one the national sins are counted up, and each receives an exactly suitable punishment. The first sin is the attempt to concentrate the landed property in a few hands.——**That join house to house . . .**] i.e., by violently expelling the poorer proprietors, see Job xx. 19, Mic. ii. 1–5, Ezek. xlvi. 18; and comp. Deut. xix. 14, Job xxiv. 2. Large additions to one's estates were diametrically opposed to the spirit, if not always to the letter, of the law of land-tenure among the Israelites. See Num. xxvii. 1–11, xxxiii. 54, 1 Kings xxi. 4, Lev. xxv. 8–17. Comp. Mr. Fenton's illustrations of this land-law from the systems of Village Communities, *Theological Review*, 1878. Pliny's complaint that the *latifundia* had ruined Italy has only a distant relation to our passage.——**To dwell alone**] Comp. Ps. xlix. 11: 'They have called lands by their own names'; also Job xxii. 8: 'And the man of force, to him belongeth the land, and he who is respected shall dwell therein.'

[9] **In mine ears . . .**] All agree that some word or words are necessary to complete the text. Jewish scholars suggest 'The cry of the oppressed hath come up,' and 'saith,' or 'for I am' (before 'Jehovah Sabáoth'):—so A. E., Kimchi, Luzzatto. The moderns mostly understand 'And hath revealed himself' (viz. Jehovah Sabáoth), comparing xxii. 14 (a doubtful passage, however). But I do not feel certain that such important words can be left to be understood; my own impression is that some words have dropped out (comp. on xxii. 14). The ḳameç in *be'oznāi* shows that those who affixed the points supposed an ellipsis.

[10] Retributive justice: barrenness sent upon the ill-gotten land.——**Ten days' work**] i.e., so much ground as a yoke of oxen can plough in a day.——**One bath**] A liquid measure = about 7 gallons, 4 pints.——**A homer**] A dry measure = 32 pecks, 1 pint. Assyrian, *imer*.——**An ephah**] The tenth part of a homer.

[11-16] Second woe: on the luxurious. ——**Who rise up early'. . .**] 'Tempestiva convivia'; comp. Eccles. x. 16, 17. 'Strong drink' means artificial wine, made of dates, apples, pomegranates, honey, barley, and sometimes of mixed ingredients (hence 'to mix strong drink,' *v.* 22).

[12] **Lute and cymbal**] Comp. Am. vi. 5, 6. On the nature of these instruments see an excursus by Wetzstein, in Delitzsch's *Jesaia*, 2nd ed.——**The work of Jehovah**] History being the realisation of God's eternal purposes (comp. xxxvii. 26, ii. 11), whether of grace,

flute, and wine, is their feast, but the work of Jehovah they regard not, and the operation of his hands they do not see. 13 Therefore my people goeth into exile unawares, and his honourable ones are starvelings, and his tumultuous ones parched with thirst. 14 Therefore Sheól enlargeth her greed, and openeth her mouth without measure, and down goeth her splendour and her tumult and her uproar, and that which is jubilant in her. 15 So the earth-born is bowed down, and the man brought low, and the eyes of the haughty are brought low, 16 but Jehovah of Hosts is exalted in judgment, and the holy God showeth himself holy through righteousness. . . .

or, as the next verse shows them to be here ('unawares') of punishment.

13 **Goeth into exile**] In the Hebr. it is the perfect of prophetic certitude. —— **Unawares**] Without their having foreseen the divine judgment.

14 **Therefore Sheól . . .**] To understand this passage, we must remember that there was a twofold conception of Sheól or Hades. First, it was localised underground. Hence one of the synonyms for Hades both in Hebrew and Assyrian is 'the pit.' Hence too the very name of the Hebrew Hades, Sheól meaning etymologically 'depth' (see Fleischer, in Delitzsch's *Jesaia*, 2nd ed., p. 104 note). Comp. note on xxxviii. 10. Next, it was conceived of as a person; comp. xiv. 9 (note), xxviii. 15, Hos. xiii. 14, Jon. ii. 2, Cant. viii. 6, Prov. i. 12, xxx. 16, Rev. vi. 8, xx. 13, 14. The two conceptions are very closely connected; thus the Greek Hades and the Teutonic Hel were variously applied to the infernal ruler and to his, or her, kingdom; comp. too the notion of the stars as both material and spiritual, Job xxxviii. 7. The Jews also, like the Greeks, spoke of a 'king of terrors' (Job xviii. 14), and the Apocalypse gives us this king's name—Abaddon (Rev. ix. 11), which is a synonym for Sheól in Prov. xv. 11.—Sheól is here treated as a feminine (like the names of countries); in xiv. 9*b* (see note) it becomes a masculine. —— **Down goeth her splendour**] 'Splendour' = nobility. The phrases chosen form a striking contrast with the still, dim, and mournful life of Hades.—It has been inferred from the Biblical descriptions that the shades (*Rephāīm*) in Sheól share a common lot, but against this may be urged (1) that the Hades in the N. T. comprehended two large divisions for the good and the bad respectively ('Abraham's bosom' and Geenna), though of course the distinction may not have been known to Isaiah; and (2) that the Babylonians and Assyrians seem to have recognised a difference among the shades corresponding to their conduct upon earth (comp. on xiv. 9).—The parallel Assyrian view of Hades may be best gathered from the Legend of Ishtar in the sixth tablet of the Izdubar Series (see Schrader, *Die Höllenfahrt Istars*, Giessen, 1874). It is, however, only Assyrian by adoption; its origin is Accadian. This accounts, as Schrader remarks, for its non-occurrence among those Semitic nations which, like the Arabs, preserved the freshness of their individuality.

15 The words of this and the following verse are mainly taken from ii. 9, 11, 17, but with a modification in the meaning.

16 **The holy God . . .**] Since Israel will not 'count Him holy' (viii. 13) by obeying His messages and His word, Jehovah must restore

17 And lambs shall graze, as if on their common, and [c] sojourning shall eat up the ruins of the fat.

18 Woe unto those who [d] draw iniquity [d] with cords of ungodliness, and sin as with cart-ropes; 19 who say, Let his work hasten, let it speed, that we may see it, and let the counsel of Israel's Holy One draw near and come, that we may know it. 20 Woe unto those who call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; who put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter. 21 Woe unto those who are wise in their own eyes, and in their own view are understanding. 22 Woe unto those who are mighty ones—for drinking wine, and valiant men—for mixing strong drink; 23 who declare the wicked righteous for a bribe, and take away

[c] Sojourners (i.e. nomad shepherds), Del., Naeg.—Kids, Sept., Ew. (another reading).
[d] Draw guilt near, Ew., Naeg.—Draw punishment near, Ges.

the balance by a judicial display of His righteousness.

17 The prophet completes his description of the retribution of the estate-hunters. But why now? The section is certainly more effective without this verse. Hence Ewald attaches it, not unplausibly, as the conclusion to the first woe.——**And sojourning eat up . . .**] This half-verse is complementary to the former. It tells us in what guise the lambs came, and whither they came. They came 'sojourning,' i.e., they belonged to nomad pastoral tribes, and they came to the grass-grown ruins of the grandees of Israel. 'Fat' has two meanings: 1. rich, as Ps. xxii. 29, lxxviii. 31; 2. the fatlings of the sheep, as Ps. lxvi. 15. Hence the phrase acquires a subtle second meaning, viz. the ruins destined for the fatlings.—Alt. rend. is also possible (for use of *gārîm*, Dr. Weir compares 2 Sam. iv. 3, Jer. xxxv. 7), but does not so well accord with the parallel line. Alt. read. is plausible, but unnecessary.

18-23 Short woes on various sorts of impiety, connected by their common share in the retribution described in *v.* 24. The first, on those **who draw iniquity with cords of ungodliness.** 'Ungodliness' is the disposition which deliberately seeks for opportunities of committing 'iniquity.' Literally, it means 'emptiness.' In their 'emptiness' of true religion, these men allow themselves to be yoked to sin like beasts of burden. The same figure in the *Rig-Veda*, ii. 48, 'undo the rope of sin' (transl. Max Müller). Alt. rend. means, in one form, that they not only fall into sin, but actually court it; or, in the other form, that by persisting in sin they invite punishment (comp. the Hindu and Buddhist doctrine of *karma*).

19 The climax of their sin:—Scoffing unbelief in the Divine retribution (comp. Am. vi. 3, Jer. xvii. 15).——**That we may know it**] Viz. by experience (ix. 9).

20 The second short woe on those who confound or rather reverse the distinctions of good and evil, who say 'Fair is foul, and foul is fair.' Comp. Job xvii. 12.

21 The third, on those who are **wise in their own eyes**, and do not fear Jehovah (Prov. iii. 7). Perhaps an allusion to the indifferentist or humanist section of the class of 'wise men,' who had no positive religious beliefs.

22, 23 The fourth, on corrupt judges who sacrifice justice to meet the demands of an expensive luxuriousness.——**Who are mighty**

the righteousness of the righteous from him. [24] Therefore, as the fire's tongue devoureth stubble, and hay sinketh in a flame, so their root shall become as rottenness, and their blossom go up as dust, because they despised the instruction of Jehovah Sabáoth, and spurned the word of Israel's Holy One.

[25] Therefore the anger of Jehovah is kindled against his

ones . . .] 'Very valiant trenchermen!' Comp. Jer. xxiii. 10, end (*Q. P. B.*)——**For mixing strong drink**] The phrase means, not 'to dilute wine with water,' but to compound rightly artificial wine (see on *v.* 11), which was apparently stronger than the natural wine.

[24] All these sins have one common characteristic—the obstinate rejection of that word which is the only source of happiness. Their punishment will be, as it were, self-evolved. This is expressed by a combination of two figures, the first borrowed from the custom of burning part of the stubble, the ashes being used for manure; the second from a decaying tree.——**The fire's tongue**] A vivid and natural personification, comp. 1 Kings xviii. 38, Acts ii. 3.

[25 30] A further development of the preceding woe. The language is vague, but there seems no reasonable doubt that the Assyrians are the people referred to; the Assyrian policy of deportation has already been alluded to in *v.* 13. It is, however, very uncertain whether these verses originally stood at the end of this prophecy. Ewald (and so *I. C. A.*) regards them as containing the prologue (*v.* 25), and the epilogue (*vv.* 26–30), of a new prophecy, which was the third and last part of a prophetic work beginning at ii. 2, and the body of which prophecy was formed by ix. 8–x. 4. There are too many examples on a smaller scale of passages being misplaced in MSS., for us to consider this at all an improbable hypothesis; and while the section v. 1–24, is no loser by *vv.* 25–30 being thus removed from it, there can be no doubt that the prophecy ix. 8–x. 4 is greatly the gainer by it. As it stands, that prophecy is thoroughly enigmatical; but, with the addition of v. 25 and *vv.* 26–30, it becomes both well-rounded and fairly intelligible. Obs., the closing words of v. 25 occur four times over in ix. 8–x. 4.—It is just possible, however, that the passage in question (v. 25–30), has a double right of existence, and that though originally written for the place where Ewald would put it, Isaiah himself appended it to chap. v., without intending to remove it from its original place. He certainly does not mind repeating himself, at any rate on a smaller scale, see on *v.* 15, and comp. x. 22 with xxviii. 22.

[25] **Is kindled**] The prophetic perfect, if the verse be read in its present context, but the historical one, if read as Ewald would have it. According to him, the prophet's discourse rises here to a wide historical survey, extending into the past and the future. 'Once (during the present generation), Yahvé manifested himself also in Jerusalem as the God who inflicts rigorous chastisement . . . but that was only a first stroke; he threatens to strike still further. In the last words we have the fundamental utterance . . . of the four following larger strophes, in which the discourse takes new starts in order to follow out this thought' (*Prophets*, ii. 54). Other critics regard the judgment as belonging to the near future. Ewald naturally thinks of the earthquake of Uzziah, Am. i. 1, Zech. xiv. 5; but earthquakes probably were no rarity in Palestine (see

people, and he stretcheth out his hand over it, and smiteth it, so that the mountains tremble, and their carcases become as refuse in the midst of the streets. For all this his anger turneth not back, but his hand is stretched out still.

[26] And he lifteth up a signal to the distant nations, and hisseth to him from the end of the earth; and, behold, hastily swiftly he cometh; [27] there is none weary and no stumbler therein, he slumbereth not and sleepeth not; the girdle of his loins is never loosed, nor the thong of his shoes torn: [28] whose arrows are sharpened, and all his bows bent, his horses' hoofs accounted as flint, and his wheels as the whirlwind: [29] he hath a roar like that of the lioness, and he roareth like the young lions, and growleth and catcheth the prey and carrieth it off safe, and there is none to rescue. [30] And there is a roaring over him in that day like the roaring of the sea, and if he look unto the earth, [e] behold distressful darkness, yea, the light is dark through the clouds thereof.[e]

[e] So Ew., Weir, Naeg., (thick darkness, Ew.).—Lo, darkness—(now) distress, and (now) light—it becometh dark in the cloudy sky thereof, Del. (after Hebr. accents).—The text is uncertain.

Dr. Pusey on Am. iv. 11, and comp. Plumptre, *Biblical Studies*, p. 136).

[26 30] The future described as in prophetic vision.——**A signal**] So in both parts of Isaiah, xi. 10, 12, xviii. 3, xiii. 2, xlix. 22, lxii. 10.——**To the distant nations**] For Jehovah is the governor of the world. The 'nations' are those of the Assyrian empire.——**Hisseth**] The Assyrians likened to bees, as in vii. 18.——**To him**] because the various elements of the Assyrian army are directed by a single will, comp. xvii. 13. Obs. the effective mysteriousness of the description;—the invaders are not yet named.——**Swiftly**] The Assyrians and Babylonians (Hab. i. 6, 8), were famous for their rapid marches.

[28] **All his bows bent**] The chief weapons of the Assyrians (comp. the engravings in Layard). So xxi. 15.——**As flint**] Shoeing being unknown, the solidity of a hoof was of prime importance. Comp. *Il.* v. 329. Hence Am. vi. 12 'speaks of it as a thing as much impracticable to make horses run upon a hard rock, as to plough up the same rock with oxen' (Lowth). See also Ges.

[30] **And there is a roaring over him . . .**] Ewald understands this of thunder, as a sign of the Divine displeasure. But considering that the word used for 'roaring' is the same as that for the 'growling' of the lion, it would seem that the subject of the verb must be still the lion, i.e., the enemy (comp. Jer. vi. 23). Ew.'s object in so explaining was to provide an antithesis to the words 'and when he looketh unto the earth,' comp. viii. 21, 22. But we have no right to interfere with the natural meaning of the text. It would be better to suppose that something has dropped out, especially as the last words of the verse are probably more or less corrupt. ——**Through the clouds thereof**] i.e., clouds of misfortune, which hang over the earth, darkening the bright day of prosperity. A figure from eclipses, comp. viii. 22; Joel iii. (iv.) 15, Am. v. 18–20, Job iii. 5.

CHAPTER VI.

THE vision and prophetic call of Isaiah, and an accompanying revelation of the mingled prospects of Israel.

In several ways a noteworthy chapter, but open to various interpretations. That which will here be given assumes the absolute sincerity of the writer, and that his narrative is generically different from the poetical fictions of Goethe and Burns (the 'Zueignung' and the 'Vision'), and even from the more naïve imaginations of William Blake. The Old Testament —not to mention the records of other religions—abounds in accounts of experiences which were only possible to the inner eye (2 Kings vi. 17), but which were not the less founded on facts. It may suffice to mention the two visions of Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 17, 19–22). If these are poetical fictions, then it is impossible to discriminate between the naïve truthfulness of primitive tradition and the scenic illusions of the contemporary novelist. And so, too, it is in the passage before us. Isaiah simply and sincerely claims to describe his personal experience.[1] No doubt there may have been a psychological starting-point for the vision in the early visits of Isaiah to the temple of Jerusalem. The pealing trumpet on festival days, and the Hallelujahs of the choir would produce a powerful impression upon his lively imagination. This is far from explaining the peculiar experience which followed, but an impression of this kind would naturally determine the general form of the vision.

It is, however, quite consistent with a belief in Isaiah's veracity to hold that the significance of the vision was not at first realised by him in all its fullness. As Tholuck has remarked, the intelligibility of what a prophet saw and heard in his inner man did not of itself involve his comprehension of its meaning. The difference between Moses and the ordinary prophet consists, we are told, in this, that Jehovah spoke with the former 'mouth to mouth, even visibly, and not in dark speeches (or enigmas)' (Num. xii. 8), and the revelation connected with Isaiah's inaugural vision must, unless communicated magically, have been a 'dark speech' to him at first. The youth, whose 'fervid zeal breaks forth on the first word of encouragement,' could not surely have at once realised that his mission would only lead to the confirmation of his people in their unbelief. As a matter of fact, we find that Isaiah's hopefulness varies at different stages of his career, but that he only once again paints the future in colours of such a lurid hue, viz. in xxxii. 13, 14. Now, if at the very outset he had received a distinct assurance that his ministry would be one 'of condemnation,' would he have been justified in indulging and

[1] It is strange at first sight that William Blake, the nearest approach to a seer that modern England can show, should have so greatly misunderstood the essential meaning of the vision of Isaiah, as to represent the prophet as saying, 'I saw no God, nor heard any, in a finite or organical perception' [this of course is true]; 'but my senses discovered the infinite in everything' [this is Aryan pantheism]; 'and as I was then persuaded, I remain confirmed, that the voice of honest indignation is the voice of God' [this is eighteenth century rationalism]. But such a view can be explained in the same way as the proverbial mistakes of the mass of poets and artists on the secrets of their art. I have quoted from Swinburne's *William Blake*, p. 214.

expressing hopes which God had told him could not be realised?[1] That he was at any time addicted to rose-coloured dreams of the future is of course entirely out of the question. But it is in perfect harmony with 'the analogy of faith' to suppose that the 'dark speech' or 'enigma' of Isaiah's early vision lay in his mind and fructified, till at length he attained that full insight into its meaning which is expressed in *vv.* 9–13. The immediate object of the vision was to set before Isaiah the ideal of prophecy as a life-work, as opposed to the primitive view connecting it too closely with isolated ecstatic moments. Isaiah stands, in consequence of this revelation, between two schools of prophecy. To his predecessors, the source of inspiration was more or less external and intermittent; to him, it was internal and perennial. Even Amos (if, at least, chaps. vii.–ix. are to be interpreted literally) seems to have needed to be occasionally rapt into the ecstatic state; Isaiah, so far as we know, had but one vision, but that one gave him a stimulus and a theme for his whole ministry.

Compare the inaugural visions of Jeremiah and Ezekiel, the form of which was presumably influenced by the vision of Isaiah. The superior genius of the latter is unmistakeable.

It is a probable conjecture that chap. vi. originally formed the preface to a small collection of prophecies of Isaiah, viz. either chaps. ii.–v., or more probably vii. 1–ix. 7.

[1] In the death-year of king Uzziah, I saw the Lord sitting upon a high and exalted throne, and his train filled the palace. [2] Seraphim were standing above him; each one had six wings, with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet,

[1] **In the death-year . . .**] B.C. 742. It has been doubted whether the vision took place before or after the death of Uzziah. But if the latter, should we not expect 'in the first year of king Jotham'? The heading, too, in i. 1 favours the view that the vision dates from the reign of Uzziah. At any rate, our present account of the vision belongs to a later reign.——**I saw the Lord . . .**] The picture is that of a king on his throne, attended on each side by courtiers (comp. 1 Kings xxii. 19). Isaiah stands at the threshold of the palace (see *v.* 4), and sees no more than 'the skirts' of the royal mantle (comp. Ex. xxxiii. 20–23). The two rows of courtiers alternately raise a cry of praise.——**The Lord**] Out of reverence. 'To see the face of Jehovah' was a possible phrase (see on i. 12), but not 'to see Jehovah.'——**The palace**] Or, the temple. But 'palace' is more in harmony with the picture. It is Jehovah's heavenly palace or temple (Ps. xi. 4, xxix. 9, Hab. ii. 20), in which there is no ark and no distinction between the Holy and the Holy of Holies.

[2] **Seraphim**] This is the only place in the Bible where the Seraphim are described as supernatural beings. The word *s'rāphīm* does, it is true, occur in Num. xxi. 6, but there it means a species of venomous serpents (called *s'rāphīm* from their 'burning' bite), which attacked the Israelites in the desert; and

[1] Comp. *I. C. A.*, pp. 21, 22. The position there asserted I have here substantially maintained, though, as I hope, with greater clearness and decision. The doctrine of 'a gracious proportion between the revelation vouchsafed and the mental state of the person receiving it' is admitted even by orthodox critics in Germany, and it may be hoped that it will soon become more prevalent in England.

and with two he flew. [3] And the one kept crying to the other and saying, Holy, holy, holy is Jehovah Sabáoth, The whole earth

the singular *sārāph* occurs in the same sense in Numb. xxi. 8, Deut. viii. 15, Isa. xiv. 29 (see note), xxx. 6. Now, although it is quite conceivable (considering the analogy of Ezekiel's Cherubim) that animal forms might be introduced into a description of heaven, it does not appear that Isaiah did regard the seraphim as animals in form, as there is nothing but their wings and their loud voice to distinguish them physically from ordinary men. It is his practice, moreover, as of the Old Testament writers in general, to use familiar phrases of mythical origin, giving them a new turn or a deeper, or at least a harmless, meaning. No class of myths is more abundant than that of serpent-myths,[1] and it would be strange if no trace of their currency in Palestine could be found in the Old Testament. But how are we to reconcile the differences between the two Biblical uses of the word 'seraphim'? We may, I think, get some light by considering the function of the Seraphim in Isaiah. They are essentially the divine guards, who keep everything that is profane or unclean at a distance. In this respect, they are strikingly analogous to the Cherubim. Now the Cherubim, as I have sought to show on philological and analogical grounds,[2] are almost certainly (I am speaking of course of the extra-Biblical, popular, mythic Cherubim) the storm-clouds, comp. Ps. xviii. 10, 11, Ezek. xxviii. 13; it is but reasonable, therefore, to conjecture that the popular mythic Seraphim are the serpent-like lightning. Isaiah uses the popular form of speech quite freely as a symbol (the 'dragon' in xiv. 29 is also a symbol). Except in the name and the supernatural colouring, there is nothing to remind us of the mythic origin of the Seraphim. Perhaps it was at Isaiah's suggestion that Hezekiah put down the 'brazen serpent' (an idolatrous symbol, called Nehushtan),[3] to which the children of Israel used to burn incense (2 Kings xviii. 4). At any rate, this reform of Hezekiah's accounts for our hearing no more of the Seraphim after this vision of Isaiah.—The popular notion of the Seraphim as angels is of course to be rejected. They are not called 'angels,' and differ widely from the angels, as described elsewhere. They are indeed more like Titans than placid Gabriels and Raphaels.—It is noteworthy that the 'living creatures' of Rev. iv. 7, 8, are an original fusion of the Cherubim of Ezekiel with the Seraphim of Isaiah.——**Were standing above him**] i.e., hovering, for with two of his wings each of them flew. ——**Covered his face**] in adoration. More strictly 'used to cover.'

[3] **Kept crying**] Comp. Rev. iv. 8: 'They rest not day and night, saying Holy, holy, holy.'——**Holy**] Comp. Ps. xxix. 9: 'In his palace every one saith, Glory!' Holiness and glory are, in fact, correlative conceptions. Jehovah in himself is 'holy,' and his manifestation of himself is 'glory.' Nor is Jehovah only Israel's God; hence the Seraphim add, that the **fullness of the whole earth is his glory** (his glory is the predicate). The cry of 'Holy' is uttered three times, either because three is a favourite number of the Hebrews (comp. Jer. vii. 4), or because it is first uttered by the two choruses, and then taken up by the whole body of Seraphim (so H. Schultz, *Alttest. Theologie*, i. 345). Of the ancient Trinitarian interpretation, Calv. remarks, 'Quorum sententiam ego non improbo: sed si

[1] See Baudissin, *Studien zur semit. Religionsgeschichte* (1876), no. iv.

[2] *Encyclopædia Britannica* (1877), art. 'Cherubim'; comp. Tiele, *Vergelijkende Geschiedenis* (1872), p. 701.

[3] Nehushtan, the student will remember, is not a name of contempt, but the popular name of the image.

is full of his glory. 4 And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him that cried, and the house became full of smoke. 5 And I said, Woe is me! surely I am undone, for I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for the King, Jehovah Sabáoth, mine eyes have seen. 6 And there flew unto me one of the seraphim, with a stone in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar. 7 And he touched my mouth with it, and said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips, and forthwith gone is thy iniquity and thy sin is forgiven. 8 And I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? And I said, Here am I, send me.

mihi res cum hereticis esset, mallem firmioribus testimoniis uti.' ——**Jehovah Sabáoth**] Specially appropriate in the mouth of the Seraphim (see on i. 9).

4 **Of him that cried**] i.e., of each one who cried.——**Became full of smoke**] The smoke indicates the coming into view of the dark side of the self-manifesting God, viz. his anger against sin (Naeg.). Comp. Rev. xv. 8, where the heavenly temple becomes full of smoke from the glory of God immediately after 'the seven angels' have received the 'golden vials full of the wrath of God.' Del.'s view seems to me farfetched.

5 **I am undone . . .**] Isaiah fears death, first, because of his consciousness of sin; comp. 1 Sam. vi. 20, Luke v. 8. The widow of Zarephath is afraid even of contact with Elijah, as one who could 'call sin to remembrance' before God (1 Kings xvii. 18).——**A man of unclean lips . . .**] Comp. 'a pure lip,' Zeph. iii. 9. The pure lips of the Seraphim painfully reminded Isaiah of his own sins of the lips. He may have been conscious of no others: these he could not but have, according to James iii. 2, and yet his guilt must be purified, before he could receive a prophet's commission from Jehovah. He feels his guilt enhanced by his 'solidarity' with his people.——**For mine eyes have seen . . .**] Isaiah's second motive for fear. It is the same which is expressed in the familiar phrase of the primitive people, that 'no man can see God, and live;' comp. Ex. xxxiii. 20.

6 One of the seraphs brings a stone from the never-extinguished fire of the altar of incense to purge the lips of the predestined apostle of their earthly dross. (Dr. Weir quotes Ps. li. 15.) So Jeremiah tells us that Jehovah touched his mouth (Jer. i. 9) as an 'outward and visible sign' of his commission. But Isaiah shows a keener sense of his sinfulness than Jeremiah, and consequently is purged from that infirmity of will, which afterwards cost Jeremiah such severe struggles (Jer. xx.). Fire is the sacramental sign of moral purification, Matt. iii. 11, comp. Num. xxxi. 23.——**A stone**] For the heavenly altar (Rev. viii. 3, ix. 13,) is formed on the model of the earthly one. Ewald rightly sees an allusion to the law in the 'Book of the Covenant,' that altars should be constructed of earth, or of unhewn stones (Ex. xx. 25), a law which evidently arose in the nomadic period before tools were common. A word for 'altar' in Himyaritic—*maslima*—also has the meaning of 'stone' (Praetorius). — On rendering, see crit. note.

8 And now Isaiah, though a mortal, is free of the heavenly precincts, and qualified to be sent, like his compeers, on the royal errands. ——**Who will go for us?**] This

9 And he said, Go and say to this people, Hear ye indeed,
but understand not, and see ye indeed, but perceive not.
10 Make the heart of this people fat, and its ears heavy, and
its eyes besmear, lest it should see with its eyes, and hear with
its ears, and its heart should understand, and it should be con-
verted and be healed. 11 And I said, How long, O Lord?
And he said, Until cities be waste without inhabitants, and
houses without men, and the ground be waste and desolate,
12 and Jehovah have removed men afar off, and the deserted
space be large in the midst of the land. 13 And should there
should yet be a tenth in it, this shall again be exterminated;
as the terebinth and as the oak, of which, after the felling, a
stock remaineth, a holy seed is the stock thereof.

is no mere 'plural of majesty'; ancient Oriental kings did not speak of themselves in the plural number. The picture is evidently that of Jehovah, 'the King,' in consultation with his trusted servants (so 1 Kings xxii. 19–22), a picture which is also perhaps suggested in Gen. i. 26. Comp. also Job ii. 1, xv. 8 (*Q. P. B.*).

9 **This people**] Even Judah, under certain circumstances, is addressed contemptuously as 'this people;' so viii. 11, xxviii. 11, 14, xxix. 13, 14.

10 **Make the heart . . .**] 'Heart' = understanding, as Hos. vii. 11, &c. 'No one,' observes Julius Müller, 'can withdraw himself from the range and influence of God's revelations without altering his moral status' (*Doctrine of Sin*, ii. 412). The obduracy, therefore, is self-caused. But as God is the first cause (Prov. xvi. 4), He must have 'made Israel to stray from his ways' (lxiii. 17, see note). Obs. 1. It is the nation as a whole which is spoken of. The phrase 'hardening of the heart' is, I think, only twice applied to individuals in books of the Old Testament, viz. to the Pharaoh of the Exodus (Ex. iv. 21, &c.) and to Sihon, king of Heshbon (Deut. ii. 30). Jews never have this phrase applied to them, but only the Jewish nation or sections of it (e.g., Isa. vi. 9, 10, xxix. 10, and here). 2. This grievous act or process has an object, or at least a compensating benefit (*v.* 13). As soon as the existing evil tendencies have worked themselves out, the purified 'remnant' shall create a perfectly new epoch for the nation (Duhm, *Theologie der Propheten*, 160). —— **Its eyes besmear**] Comp. xxix. 10, xliv. 18. So Shakspeare:—

> For when we in our viciousness grow hard,
> Oh misery on't, the wise gods seal our eyes.

Sir Thomas Roe's chaplain mentions a son of the Great Mogul, who had had his eyes sealed up for three years by his father as a punishment (Burder, *Oriental Customs*, i. 178).

11 **Lord, how long?**] The question is wrung from Isaiah by his compassion.

12 **Removed**] A covert reference to the Assyrian policy of deportation.

13 **. . . a tenth in it**] Parallel passage, Zech. xiii. 8, 9. A single judgment will not be sufficient to eradicate the evil tendencies. —— **Like the terebinth and the oak**] Like those evergreen trees which, even when they are cut down, send out new shoots from the stump, so the 'tenth part' of Israel, even

CHAPTER VII.

THIS chapter forms the first part of a group of discourses, all connected directly or indirectly with the Syro-Israelitish war referred to in the opening verses. The latter require to be illustrated by the parallel passages in 2 Kings xvi. 5–9 (comp. xv. 37) and 2 Chr. xxviii. 5–16). Both of these appear to be less original than the narrative in Isaiah, especially that of Chronicles, which many critics go so far as to reject as absolutely unhistorical. Nor are they without excuse, not to say justification, considering the difficulty of discriminating between the traditions embodied by the Chronicler, and the adventitious matter due to his predominating regard for edification. One great stumbling-block in 2 Chr. xxviii. is the crushing defeats which it asserts to have been sustained by Ahaz (*vv.* 5, 6), but which are not mentioned in Kings. How, it has been plausibly asked, could Isaiah have called the two hostile kings 'smoking firebrands,' if they had just inflicted such a crushing blow on Judah? On the other hand, Dr. Caspari declares, after an elaborate investigation of the narratives, that 'nothing can be clearer than that the events of 2 Chr. xxviii. 5, &c., fall between those of the two halves of 2 Kings xvi. 5 *a* and *b*; that the author of Kings gives a report of the beginning and the end, while the Chronicler gives a supplementary account of that which happened in the middle, of the campaign. He shows us, in fact, how it was that such an extreme calamity as the siege of Jerusalem became possible.'[1]

Into the manifold difficulties of a historical reconstruction of this period I am not called upon to enter. I must assume, however, what is now generally admitted, that the object of the northern confederates was to compel Judah to become a party to a coalition against the common enemy of Syria and Palestine—Assyria. Curiously enough, Azariah or Uzziah, the grandfather of Ahaz, (or Jotham, in his father's name,) had, according to the Inscriptions, been a leading member of just such a coalition only six years before (B.C. 740).[2]

It will be observed that chap. vii. does not claim to be the work of Isaiah. There is also a looseness in the connection, and an occasional

when almost consumed, shall have such a 'stump' or 'stock' in its pious remnant, the 'seed of holiness.' This is the bright side of the judgment, by which Isaiah constantly relieves the general gloom of his preaching (i. 27, iv., ii., x. 20, xxix. 18, xxx. 18, &c.)——**A holy seed**] So 'the holy seed,' Ezra ix. 2. 'Holy' = dedicated to Jehovah, with the derived meaning of inviolable (iv. 3).—Obs. There is no reference here to the Messiah; but the figure is precisely the same as that used for the Messiah in xi. 1, comp. x. 33. As soon as the pious remnant of Israel is organised, a personal stem becomes a necessary conception.

[1] Caspari, *Ueber den syrisch-ephraimitischen Krieg* (Christiania, 1849), p. 101. Compare Delitzsch, *Jesaja*, pp. 10–16; and among less conservative critics, Ewald (*History*, vol. iv.) and Bertheau (*Exegetisches Handbuch* on Chronicles).

[2] Schrader, *Keilinschriften und Geschichtsforschung*, pp. 395–421.

feebleness of style, which make even the editorship of Isaiah difficult to realise :—notice in particular the break between *v.* 16 and *v.* 17, and the cumbrous style of *vv.* 17–25. The same looseness of connection is apparent in chap. viii. Taken together with the very peculiar introduction to chap. vii., and the cumbrousness of vii. 17–25, it makes it a very probable conjecture that the whole section vii. 1–ix. 7 only assumed its present form long after the original utterance of the prophecies. Perhaps when the last editor took up the work, the manuscript authority used by him had become partly mutilated or illegible.

In *I. C. A.*, p. 25, I described chaps. vii. 1—ix. 7, as 'an epitome of the discourses delivered at this great national crisis,' viz. the Syrian and Israelitish invasion. I can now add, that at any rate the first part of this section (chap. vii.) has probably been worked up or 'restored' to the best of his ability by a comparatively late editor, on the basis of an incomplete transcript of the original epitome. Whether the latter was the work of Isaiah, or of one of Isaiah's disciples acting under his direction or at any rate in his spirit, I cannot, of course, venture to pronounce. To this partly 'restored' epitome, there appears to be prefixed an illustrative passage from the book, or section of a book, entitled, in 2 Chr. xxxii. 32, 'the vision of Isaiah the son of Amoz.' The historical setting is a characteristic which this prophecy shares in common with those in chap. xx. and chaps. xxxvi.–xxxix.

[1] And it came to pass in the days of Ahaz son of Jotham, son of Uzziah, king of Judah, that Rezin king of Aram, together with Pekah son of Remaliah, king of Judah, went up to Jerusalem to war against it (but he was not able to war against it). [2] And it was told the house of David, saying,

[1] **Rezin**] The Syrian king appears to have been the soul of the expedition : hence the singular number of the verbs. Pekah, as the Hebraist will observe, is only attached by the Vâv of association (commoner in Arabic, but see li. 19). The pretender to the throne of Judah, too, has a Syrian name (*v.* 6). ——**Went up**] The phrase has no special reference to the elevated situation of Jerusalem (Knob.), for it is used of retreating as well as of invading armies (1 Kings xv. 19, 2 Kings xii. 19, Jer. xxi. 2, xxxiv. 21, xxxvii. 5, 11.) See Graf, *Studien und Kritiken*, 1854, p. 891, &c.—— **To war against it**] A term for the protracted combat which went on by the gate of a besieged city (Judges ix. 45, 52, 2 Sam. xi. 20). In 2 Kings xvi. 5 it is stated that Jerusalem had been enclosed (a different word), with a view, that is, to the storming of the city.——**But he was not able . . .**] Presumably because some bad news (such as the approach of the Assyrians) compelled him to renounce his intention. This is an anticipative remark, like those in xx. 1, xxxviii. 21 ; consequently the circumstances related in the following verses should come in order of time before the last clause of *v.* 1.

[2] **It was told the house of David**] For the expedition was really directed against the family of David ; its expressed object (*v.* 6), is not conquest—but a change of dynasty. In 2 Kings xvi. 5, too, there is a trace of this; for we read —not 'they besieged Jerusalem'—but 'they besieged Ahaz.' As to

Aram [a] resteth upon Ephraim; and his heart shook, and the heart of his people, as the trees of the forest shake before the wind. [3] And Jehovah said unto Isaiah, Come go out to meet Ahaz, thou and Shear-Yashub thy son, at the end of the conduit of the upper pool, at the highway of the fuller's field; [4] and say unto him, Look that thou keep calm; fear not, neither let thine heart be soft, because of these two stumps of smoking firebrands, even for the burning anger of Rezin and Aram, and the son of Remaliah. [5] Because Aram hath purposed evil against thee (with) Ephraim and the son of Remaliah, saying, [6] Let us go up against Judah and [b] distress it,[b] and break through and win it for ourselves, and let us

[a] Hath settled (i.e. encamped), Ew., Naeg.
[b] So Ges. (conj.).—Alarm, Ew., Del., Naeg. (text).

the 'house of David,' see on *v.* 13. ——**Resteth upon**] viz. as an auxiliary. According to alt. rend. the figure is taken from the appearance of a swarm of flies or locusts. But surely the cause of the alarm of Ahaz was not any encampment, but the confederacy.——**Ephraim**] The popular name for the kingdom of Israel.

[3] **Go out**] Isaiah lived in the middle (lower) city, 2 Kings xx. 4 (Heb. text). He was now to meet Ahaz at the end of the city. By his social rank (probably), as well as by his position as a prophet, he could venture to address Ahaz unbidden. Comp. on xxxvii. 2.——**Shear-Yashub**] i.e., A remnant shall return (comp. x. 22). An instance of the way in which Isaiah and his family were 'for signs and for omens' (viii. 18). According to Ewald, the meaning of the name formed the subject of a revelation, now lost, which originally preceded that concerning Immanuel. It seems safer to assume that Shear-Yashub went as a witness, either to chronicle events in his memory, or for his own sake as a means of religious education.——**The conduit of the upper pool**] Ahaz had probably gone thither, like Hezekiah, on a similar occasion, 'to stop the waters of the fountains without the city' (2 Chr. xxxii. 3). The 'upper pool' may be the Birket-el-Mamilla = 'the dragon's well' of Neh. ii. 13; it seems to correspond to the 'lower pool' of xxii. 9. See, however, Capt. Warren, in *Athenæum*, Feb. 6, 1875.

[4] **Smoking**] i.e., almost burnt out.——**The son of Remaliah**] Indicating the mean origin of the upstart Pekah: comp. 'the son of Kish,' 1 Sam. x. 11, 'the son of Jesse,' xx. 30. It is rather singular that the same form occurs five times in the list of Solomon's twelve provincial officers for supplying the royal tables.

[6] **Break through**] The same word is used with reference to the fortified towns or passes commanding the entrance into a country, 2 Chr. xxi. 17 (in Hiphil), xxxii. 1 (with the same 'pregnant construction' as here, but in Kal).——**The son of Tabel**] The way in which this person is mentioned suggests that he was an obscure adventurer, like Pekah (2 Kings xv. 25), and his name (= 'good (is) God' in Aramaic; comp. Tabrimmon), indicates that he was a Syrian. The name occurs again among the Aramaic-speaking 'people of the land,' after the exile (Ezra iv. 7). It is also found under the form Itibil or Tibil on an Assyrian tablet, pub-

appoint king in the midst of it the son of Tabel: [7] thus saith the Lord, Jehovah, It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass. [8] For the head of Aram is Damascus, and the head of Damascus is Rezin, [c] and within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people,[c] [9] and the head of Ephraim is Samaria, and the head of Samaria is the son of

[c] Omitted as interpolation by Ges., Ew., Kuenen.

lished by Layard, in connection with Rezin and Samaria (Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 118).

[8, 9] **For the head of Aram is Damascus . . .**] The chief cities of Syria and Israel are Damascus and Samaria:—the chief city of Judah is Jerusalem. Those two powers which the prophet regards as essentially profane or secular and unconnected with Jehovah, are and shall continue to be confined within their allotted range. So, too, the rulers of Syria and Israel are Rezin and Pekah—puny mortals, whereas (it is implied) the true king of Judah is Jehovah. But in the very middle of this symmetrical structure of parallelism we are surprised by a precise chronological statement scarcely germane (at first sight) to the subject. Attempts, indeed, have been made to eliminate it as an intrusive marginal note of some later reader of Isaiah, or to find a better place for it in the middle of *v.* 9, after 'the son of Remaliah' (so Lowth). The latter view improves the connection, but gives a very monotonous aspect to the passage; which must also be said of Ewald's plan of omitting the interrupting words altogether, and placing at the end, 'But the head of Judah is Jerusalem, and the head of Jerusalem is Jehovah.' And yet it must be admitted that the clause, **And within threescore and five years shall Ephraim be broken that it be not a people**, does read very strangely in a prophecy designed to encourage Ahaz in the midst of a pressing danger, and further that we have no parallel either in Isa. i.–xxxix., or in the works of Isaiah's contemporaries, for such a precise statement of the date of a still distant event. The latter point, however, supplies merely a subsidiary argument. If Isaiah wrote the words, 'Thus saith Jehovah to Cyrus' (xlv. 1), there is no reason why he should not have written 'Within threescore and five years.' And whether he foretold the appearance of Cyrus or not (on which even believers in the supernatural are divided), it is certain that the disputed clause in *v.* 8 is in perfect accordance with the style of Isaiah (comp. xxi. 16, xvi. 14, xvii. 1, xxv. 2). And then, as to the interruption of the parallelism, may it not be designed? Some critics are far too prone to alter the text with a view to the parallelism. The Biblical writers were not slaves to this rhetorical custom:—how, indeed, could they be, with due regard to their primary function of teaching and revealing? If the interruption of the parallelism prevents the effect of monotony, as it does here, and throws out an important statement into bold relief, which is the case here, why should it not be allowed?—A more plausible objection to the received text is that based on the circumstances of Ahaz, who, it has been ironically remarked, would not have been much comforted by the announcement of such a distant catastrophe. This is undeniable, but the objectors forget that the editors of the works of the prophets (whether they were the prophets themselves or others is here unimportant), had different objects from those of the original prophetic speakers. There can be no doubt that discourses originally separated in time are

Remaliah. If ye have no faith, verily ye shall not have continuance. [10] And Jehovah spoke further to Ahaz, saying,

sometimes fused together, and it is even conceivable that the editors sometimes inserted passages which were never delivered orally at all. That Isaiah spoke the paragraph announcing the destruction of Ephraim as a consolation to Ahaz in the Syrian war, is most improbable. But this does not exclude his having written it afterwards; or, if the analogy of early prophecy be regarded as contradicting such a hypothesis, there is nothing (except a superstitious belief in the unalterableness of the Biblical texts) to prevent us from holding that some pious student and editor of Isaiah, who honestly believed that Isaiah must or might have foreknown the date of the final fall of Samaria, inserted this remarkable paragraph. I conclude, therefore, 1. that the announcement of the fall of 'Ephraim' is not to be separated from the rest of the paragraph; 2. that it was made, not for the benefit of Ahaz, but for that of a much later generation; and 3. that the paragraph must remain as it is, unless we are prepared to restore the entire text of Isaiah to the form in which the pen of the prophet left it—a task which no one perhaps will have the boldness to undertake. What the writer means by this emphatic declaration seems to me to be this,—If Judah does not cast aside all human confidences, and rely exclusively on Jehovah, she will share (at least in some degree), the fate of Ephraim, and be overthrown, though not for ever.—And now as to the date fixed in this prediction. According to the most ancient theory (Jerome, Euseb., A. E.), it is the captivity of Tiglath-Pileser, or Sargon, which is referred to;—against this, see Pusey, *Minor Prophets*, i. 148. Another old, but much more reasonable, view is that of Archbishop Usher, followed by Hengst., that the reference is to the transplantation of a foreign population to Samaria in the days of Esarhaddon (Ezra iv. 2). A much better confirmation of this view is now derivable from Assyriology, as Mr. Bosanquet was the first to notice (Smith's *Assurbanipal*, page 363). Even after 722 Samaria was 'quite a respectable power, with which the Assyrian kings had to reckon' (Schrader). The last mention of the second kingdom of Samaria is on the Inscription of 681–673. In the reign of Assurbanipal, in 646 or soon after, there lived a certain Nabu-sar-akhi-su, an Assyrian prefect of Samaria, who was then invested with the eponymy. At this date, then, the kingdom was at an end. Reckoning 65 years from 736 B.C., assumed as the date of Isaiah's meeting with Ahaz, we come to 671, which may very well have been the year when 'Samaria was' finally 'broken, so as not to be a people'; comp. Ezra iv. 2, 10. In the latter passage Asnappar (rather 'Osnappar), according to Mr. G. Smith, is Assurbanipal, who was co-regent with his father Esar-haddon. The ordinary theory makes it a corruption of a form of Esar-haddon (see Ewald), which however is less likely, as Esar-haddon's name has been correctly transmitted in *v.* 2. **If ye have no faith . . .**] Or, if ye hold not fast, verily ye shall not stand fast (rendering in *I. C. A.*) There is a designed assonance between the clauses; we find it again in 2 Chr. xx. 20 (see Hebr.); also Hab. ii. 4.

[10] **And Jehovah spoke further . . .**] The form of the phrase is peculiar, and only occurs elsewhere in viii. 5. Here, however, it is doubly remarkable, because it is not a direct communication from Jehovah to Ahaz which follows, but a mediate one through the prophet. In spite of Delitzsch's deep remark pointing to the prophet's consciousness of Jehovah, the most natural view, considering the general cha-

11 Ask thee a sign of Jehovah thy God, [d] deep unto Sheól or high unto heaven.[d] 12 But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I put Jehovah to the test. 13 And he said, Hear, I pray

[d] So the Greek versions (but not Sept.), Vulg., Ew., Del.—Ask something in the depth, or in the height above, Ges., Weir, Naeg.

racter of the chapter, seems to me that 'Jehovah' is an error either of the scribe or of the editor of the section. The following words were perhaps spoken at a different time and place from *vv.* 4–9.

11 **Ask thee a sign**] It is clear that something had passed between Isaiah and Ahaz, through our ignorance of which we cannot thoroughly understand the sequel. Very probably it had some reference to the plan of an embassy to Assyria (2 Kings xvi. 7), already maturing in the royal mind. Chronology is not opposed to this view, for it is only stated in *vv.* 2, 5 that a confederacy had been formed, not that the hostile armies had as yet set foot on the soil of Judah. We may well suppose that Isaiah was as unfavourable to an Assyrian as he was afterwards to an Egyptian alliance, and that he did all in his power to dissuade or deter the king from it. In *vv.* 17–25 his language is deterrent; in the lost passage which should precede *v.* 11 it was probably of a dissuasive character. 'Trust in Jehovah,' the prophet may have said, 'and your highest hopes will be surpassed.' And now he continues, 'Ask thee a sign of this.' What sort of sign did Isaiah mean on this occasion?——**Deep unto Sheól or high unto heaven**] i.e., say some, Isaiah will either call up from the dead the shade of some mighty prophet or hero—a Samuel or a David—or 'darken the sun at midday' (comp. the wonder of the sundial, xxxviii. 8). To the second alternative, no strong objection can be taken, but the first is open to criticism. It is true that Isaiah must have believed in Jehovah's lordship over Sheól (1 Sam. ii. 6), and true that there would be a certain fitness in the prophet's availing himself of the presumed fondness of the king for necromancy. On the other hand, (1) it seems probable that an offer of this kind would have been expressed more distinctly, and (2) we find Isaiah, at the very same period, denouncing necromantic practices in the strongest manner (viii. 19). It is safer, therefore, to take both expressions, 'deep unto Sheól' and 'high unto heaven' metaphorically, comparing lvii 9 (end), and still better Job xi. 7, 8 :—

Canst thou find out the depth of Elohim?
Or canst thou find out the end of Shaddai?
Heights of heaven! what canst thou do?
Deeper than Sheól! what canst thou know?

Nothing is impossible to Jehovah; therefore Ahaz has perfect freedom of choice, provided that he asks in reverence. He may ask, for instance, for the restoration of some lost child from the dead, but not for anything inconsistent with, or capable of being turned against, the true religion. Contrast, in passing, the Old and New Testaments in their estimate of 'signs.'——**Jehovah thy God**] Ahaz was a genuine worshipper of Jehovah, but also of 'other gods beside' him. His name in full appears to have been Jehoahaz (Yahukhazi in Tiglath-Pileser II.'s great Inscription). This is not inconsistent with the expression 'my God' in *v.* 13 (see note).

12 **But Ahaz said . . .**] Ahaz is incredulous. No doubt he has prophets of his own, in whose word he places more confidence than in that of Isaiah. He desires, therefore, to break off the conference under the hypocritical pretext of not wishing to 'test Jehovah' (a sin springing from unbelief, Ex. xvii. 7, Deut. vi. 16).

13 **And he said**] Here again the

you, O house of David; is it too little for you to weary men, that ye will also weary my God? 14 Therefore the Lord himself shall appoint you a sign; behold, [e] the young woman [e]

[e] So Hitzig, R. Williams, Naeg., and (in effect) Ges. The maiden (*Jungfrau*), Ew., Del. The virgin, Weir (who observes 'But the Hebr., strictly speaking, does not correspond to our "virgin."') My former rend. 'The damsel' (*I. C. A.*, p. 27), is liable to the charge of ambiguity.

conjecture is a probable one that the following discourse was spoken at a fresh time and place. It is highly noteworthy that the prophecy is first of all directed to the **house of David**, not to Ahaz alone. It would seem that the house of David, i.e., the various branches of the royal family, was almost as numerous a body in Judah as it was, according to Brugsch, in Egypt, and that it was able to exercise a decisive political influence. On the former point, see *I. C. A.*, p. 88 (top), and comp. Zeph. i. 8; on the latter, see three passages in Jeremiah, where the members of the royal family receive the designation 'kings of Judah' (xvii. 20, Hitz., xix. 3, xxv. 18), just as the queen-mother is called 'the mistress' (Jer. xiii. 18, 1 Kings xv. 13, 2 Kings x. 13). They appear to have monopolised the judicial function (see Jer. xxi. 11, 12), so that the people had frequent opportunities of testing their fitness for the crown. Hence on at least one occasion the unpopularity of the eldest son of the king led to his being excluded from the succession by 'the people of the land' (2 Kings xxiii. 30; comp. *vv.* 31, 36). In fact, the queen-mother[1] and the royal princes formed a numerous and influential upper caste, which only a king of unusual force of character, like Hezekiah or Josiah, could venture, and that rather timidly, to oppose. For instances of high officials belonging to the royal family, see 1 Kings xxii. 26, 2 Kings xxv. 25, 2 Chr. xxviii. 7, Jer. xxxviii. 6. (Graf, on Jer. xxi. 11, would extend the meaning of the term 'house of David' to all who enjoyed any office or dignity under the crown, comparing our phrase 'the court.' Similarly Hitz. But this is very unnatural, and the analogy of Egypt is rather against it.)——**My God**] Yet in *v.* 10 Isaiah had said 'thy God.' True, but Ahaz had forfeited his religious rights by his unbelief. So in some threatening prophecies (e.g., vi. 10) 'my people' becomes 'this people.'

14 **The Lord himself**] Whom ye reject.——**Behold**] A forewarning of a great event.——**The young woman**] The prophet sees the woman selected by Jehovah with the inner eye. ('*A* young woman,' however, is not grammatically wrong. No idiom is more familiar than the use of the article of species. Del. quotes Num. xi. 27, where Auth. Vers. rightly has 'a young man,' though the Hebr. has the definite article.) It is remarkable that the prophet should lay stress on the child's mother, and it warrants the suspicion that he saw something peculiar in ~~his~~ circumstances. As he gives us no explanatory hint, however, we are driven to the conjecture that he either referred to some young woman actually present, or that he had a dim intuition that the mother of so remarkable a child must herself be in some way distinguished from others. The word rendered 'young woman,' '*almah*,

[1] The high rank of the queen-mother seems to be a relic of the primitive age in which the relationship of the mother was of such vast importance (Accadians, Etruscans, Finns, &c.). The political value of the position is strikingly shown in the authority usurped for six years in Judah by the bold Athaliah. The mention of the mothers of the kings seems connected with their high rank in the social system as queen-mothers. It is singular enough that Ahaz is one of the only two kings of Judah whose mothers are not mentioned in the historical books. Perhaps his mother died before arriving at the dignity of queen-mother.

is with child and shall bring forth a son, and shall call his

gives us no clue. For though in every other Biblical passage where it occurs (Ps. lxviii. 26, 1 Chr. xv. 20, are hardly exceptions), the context shows that it is used of an unmarried woman, its etymology thoroughly justifies a laxer interpretation. Compare my *Notes and Criticisms on the Hebrew Text of Isaiah*, pp. 7, 8.—As to the historical meaning of the passage, opinions are and always will be divided. There is no explanation which does not require us to make some assumption not directly sanctioned by the text. The only question is, Which assumption is most in harmony with Isaiah's early prophecies? The first theory (*a*) which presents itself is that started by Rashi and A. E., and adopted by Ges., Hitz., Knob., that the mother referred to is the wife of Isaiah. In favour of this one may urge the significance of the names of other sons of Isaiah (vii. 3, viii. 3, comp. 18). But how can Isaiah have called his wife by a name so liable to be misunderstood as *'almah*, especially as in the very next chapter he gives her what was probably her recognised title, 'the prophetess' (viii. 3)? It can hardly be that this objection is adequately met by the conjecture that Isaiah had married a second wife, who was at that time giving birth to a son (Ges., Dr. S. Davidson). There is also (*b*) the theory of Hofmann, Köhler, and Dr. Weir, that 'the young woman' = the people of Israel, as the bride of Jehovah (comp. liv. 5, Ezek. xvi.; Hos. ii. 16, 19, 20, Zeph. iii. 17). Against this it may be urged: 1. that this figure of speech is reserved for the higher style of prophecy; 2. that the advocates of the theory are not able to agree on the meaning of the birth of the child. Hofmann says the child is the regenerate people; Dr. Weir that child-birth is simply an allegory of deliverance from danger (though the child, he inconsistently says, is also a type of the Messiah). Others (*c*) take the clause as to the birth of the son hypothetically. Roorda, e.g., explains thus: 'If any young woman is at this time with child, she may call her son by the name Immanuel,' as a memorial of the foretold deliverance (*Orientalia*, 1840, pp. 129, 130). So Kuenen and before him substantially Eichhorn. But thus we get no sign at all, whether of promise or of threatening—not to mention the appeal to Immanuel as an individual in viii. 8. There remains[1] the theory (*d*) that the 'young woman' is the mother of the Messiah, whose advent, as Ewald has well pointed out, was expected by Isaiah to synchronise with the Assyrian invasion (see chaps. ix., xi.). The touch of passion, to which Sir E. Strachey has already called attention in the opening words (*Hebrew Politics*, p. 104), suggests that there was something extraordinary in the child beyond such external peculiarities as name and food. There is, besides, a prophecy of Isaiah's contemporary, Micah (v. 3–5), which may be fairly held to allude to the two Isaianic prophecies of God-with-us and Wonder-Counsellor:—

'Therefore will he (Jehovah) give them up, until a travailing woman hath brought forth, and (until) the remnant of his brethren return unto the children of Israel; and he (the Messiah) shall stand, and shall shepherd in the strength of Jehovah, &c.; for ~~thus~~ shall he be great unto the ends of the earth.'

It is true that there is no mention of Immanuel's being of Davidic origin, but strictly speaking there is no mention of the Davidic origin of the Messiah even in chap. ix. At any rate, there is nothing here to exclude such an ancestry; and

[1] The theory that Immanuel = Hezekiah was long ago disproved by the remark of Jerome, that Hezekiah must have been at least nine years old when this prophecy was delivered (comp. 2 Kings xvi. 2, xviii. 2).

name Immanuel. [15] Curdled milk and honey shall he eat, when he shall know how to reject the evil and choose the good. [16] For before the boy shall know how to reject the

Justin Martyr (*Dial. c. Tryph.*, 68) long ago argued in favour of it from the prophecy being addressed to the 'house of David.' It is true, again, that nothing is said of the child Immanuel's growing up to be a king and a deliverer. But this only confirms the view, already adopted as probable, that chap. vii. consists of an incomplete summary of Isaianic discourses; or again (as in *I. C. A.*, p. 31) we may regard this prophecy as the first rough sketch of the Messianic doctrine, to be filled up on subsequent opportunities. Why indeed should we expect a single prophecy (especially if only handed down from notes) to be as complete as an article in a dictionary?—The two really important objections are these: 1. Is it conceivable that Isaiah expected the Messiah to pass through the period of exile predicted in vi. 11–13, before he restored the kingdom to the regenerate remnant of Israel? The answer is that, on grounds external to this prophecy, the concluding portion of chap. vi. is probably the latest portion of the group formed by chapters vi.–ix. 7; whereas the prophecies in chap. vii. are probably the earliest, and in many respects the least altered, of the group. When the prophecy of Immanuel was delivered, Isaiah could not have had such a full conception of the events preceding the appearance of the Messiah as he attained afterwards. And, 2. Would the birth of a child from an unnamed and unknown woman be recognised as a sign by Ahaz? The answer is, 1. that this was unimportant to Isaiah. Ahaz and his house were judicially hardened, and their unbelief on this occasion was a fresh degree in the hardening (comp. xxix. 10, 11). The prophecy was really addressed to those who could receive it, such as Isaiah's disciples (comp. viii. 16). And, 2. that the obscurity of the mother of Immanuel was part of the punishment which must, from the context, have been included in the prophecy. It was neither Ahaz himself, nor a son of Ahaz, who was the destined deliverer of God's people, but the child of a nameless and obscure mother (Del.).——**Is with child**] So we should render, and not 'shall be with child,' in view of the parallel passage, Gen. xvi. 11 (Judg. xiii. 5, 7 is doubtful), and of *vv.* 15, 16.——**Immanuel**] i.e., God (is) with us, or, on our side; compare Ittiel. This symbolic name is a part of the sign. The meaning is determined by viii. 10.

[15] **Curdled milk and honey shall he eat**] Another significant detail. Milk and honey are not mentioned, as we should expect, as delicacies, but as a food involving privation (this is clear from *v.* 22). It is in vain to quote Deut. xxxii. 13, 14 in opposition, for milk and honey are there mentioned with wine and bread. For a lad arrived at years of discretion (see next note) to have no other food but milk and honey was certainly extraordinary, and implies that 'the land of Immanuel' had been brought very low. Obs., this particular detail would be true of a multitude of other Hebrew children, which shows that it can only form a subordinate part of the 'sign.'——**To reject the evil and to choose the good**] A fuller phrase for 'to discern between good and evil.' Hitz. explains it of pleasant and unpleasant food (as 2 Sam. xix. 35), but most critics take it in a moral sense (as Gen. ii. 9, Deut. i. 39, 1 Kings iii. 9). The second view will throw the period named in the next verse rather more forward than the first, and as the circumstance of eating milk and honey is to be a 'sign,' this view seems the preferable one.

[16] **For before . . .**] A somewhat vague definition, which makes it all the more unlikely that Isaiah

evil and choose the good, deserted shall the land become, at the two kings whereof thou art horribly afraid. [17] Jehovah shall bring upon thee and upon thy people, and upon thy fathers' house, days such as have not come since the day of Ephraim's departing from Judah, [f the king of Assyria.f] [18] And it shall come to pass that in that day Jehovah shall hiss to the flies at the end of the Nile-arms of Egypt, and to the bees in the land of Assyria, [19] and they shall all of them come and settle on the steeply walled valleys of the torrents, and on

f Omitted as interpolation by Ges., Hitz.

himself should have written *v.* 8 *b*. Hitz.'s view would fix the term at the end of the second year, for a Jewish child was weaned in his third (2 Macc. vii. 27).——**Deserted shall the land become**] i.e., the people of Syria and (N.) Israel shall be carried captive by the Assyrians. Comp. 2 Kings xv. 29, xvi. 9, and Smith's *The Assyrian Canon*, pp. 121–125.

[17] The abruptness of the transition is remarkable, and, taken together with the cumbrous style of the sequel, confirms the theory that chap. vii. is based on incomplete, though authentic, notes. We are now introduced to a dark side in the advent of Immanuel. Had Jehovah 'found faith' in Israel's rulers and representatives, Immanuel would have been simply a sign of promise; as it is, he is also a sign of threatening. The Syrians and Israelites shall indeed be removed, but shall be succeeded by a worse foe than Judah had ever had before, 'the king of Assyria.' It is probable enough that this prophecy only confirmed Ahaz in his resolution of sending an embassy to Assyria. He may have hoped thus to render the fulfilment of the prophecy impossible.——**Departing**] Obs. the deep impression produced by the severance of the north. [Hitz. and Knobel omit the last words as a gloss, as also in *v.* 20 and in viii. 7. Ew. and Del. retain them, but without offering any solid reason. Surely they fit in here very badly, and mar the effect of the revelation in *v.* 18. Such ultra-distinctness is just the manner of the interpolators.]

[18] According to Ewald, a long piece has fallen out between *vv.* 17 and 18, relating how Isaiah left the king, and went home, and explained his intuitions of the future, and the truths to which Ahaz would not listen, in the circle of his disciples. Yet, if *v.* 15 was spoken to Ahaz (which Ew. allows), must not *v.* 22 have been so too, for without it *v.* 15 is unintelligible? That something, however, has been lost with regard to Immanuel seems highly probable.——**Shall hiss to the flies . . .**] Isaiah had already said (v. 26) that Jehovah would hiss to 'the distant nations,' with a description which precisely fits the Assyrians. He now refers to them and to Egypt by name, and adds that the two great rivals shall come to a collision in Judah. There is nothing to indicate that the intervention of Egypt was out of regard to Rezin and Pekah, as Knob. and Kuenen suppose. It is rather a subsequent phase of the judgment upon Judah.—The Egyptians are compared to the swarms of venomous flies which infest the region of the Nile (see on xviii. 1), the Assyrians to the bees of their native woods and mountains (comp. Deut. i. 44, Ps. cxviii. 12).——**At the end . . .**] i.e., in the whole extent of country watered by the Nile and its arms; comp. lvi. 11, Gen. xix. 4, xlvii. 2 (Hebr.).

[19] **On the steeply walled val-**

the rents of the cliffs, and on all the thorn-bushes, and on all the pastures. 20 In that day shall the Lord shave with the razor that is hired on the banks of the River, [f with the king of Assyria,f] the head and the hair of the feet, and the beard also it shall sweep away. 21 And it shall come to pass in that day that a man shall nourish a young cow and two sheep; 22 and (yet) it shall come to pass that because of the abundance of milk which he shall get, that he shall eat curdled milk, for curdled milk and honey shall everyone eat who is left within the land. 23 And it shall come to pass in that day that there shall be every place, where there used to be a thousand vines at a thousand pieces of silver—for thorns and briars shall it be; 24 with arrows and with bow shall men come thither, for all the land shall become thorns and briars. 25 And as for all the mountains which used to be hoed, g thou mayest not enter there for fear of thorns and briars g; and it shall be a place for letting loose oxen, and for sheep to trample.

f Omitted as interpolation by Ges., Hitz.
g Thither will the fear of thorns and thistles not come, Ew., Weir.

leys . . .] A faithful picture of the scenery of Judah.

20 **With the hired razor**] An allusion to the treaty of Ahaz with Assyria. Tiglath-Pileser was hired in one sense by Ahaz, in another by Jehovah (comp. x. 5). If chap. vii. be a summary of various prophecies, this will probably be a somewhat later insertion.——**On the banks . . .**] Assyria being the ruling power on both sides of the Euphrates.——**The head . . . the beard**] For Judah has been stripped of her clothing, her defences; comp. i. 6.

21. 22 Obs. the increasing awkwardness of the style, so unlike Isaiah.—The survivors will be so few, and the extent of pasturage owing to the devastation so great, that milk and honey will become the chief articles of food.——**Two sheep**] 'Two' is feminine.——**And yet**] Even with these few cattle.

23 **A thousand vines . . .**] This reminds us of the thousand shekels paid yearly for a vineyard, as a rent to Solomon (Cant. viii. 11). Here, however, the thousand shekels are the purchase-money.

24 **With arrows . . .**] For protection against wild animals. The lot of the shepherd in the desert between Jerusalem and Jericho (he carries his pistol with him) is a commentary on this passage.

25 **Unto there**] viz. to cultivate the highlands.——**For fear . . .**] Alt. rend., 'there shall be no *fear* of thorns, so quickly and naturally will they grow,' though slightly easier grammatically, seems obscure and artificial.

CHAPTER VIII.

[1] And Jehovah said unto me, Take thee a large tablet, and write thereon with a common pen, Concerning Maher-shalal-hash-baz; [2] and take for me, as credible witnesses, Uriah the priest, and Zechariah son of Jeberechiah. [3] And I went near the prophetess, and she conceived, and bore a son. [4] And Jehovah said unto me, Call his name Maher-shalal-hash-baz; for before the boy shall know how to cry, My father, and, My mother, men shall carry the riches of Damascus and the sport of Samaria before the king of Assyria.

[5] And Jehovah spake still further unto me, saying, [6] For-

1-4 'Maher-shalal-hash-baz;' a twofold sign of the Assyrian intervention.

1 **A large tablet**] i.e., probably of wood polished with wax (same word for metal mirrors in iii. 23). 'Large,' for it was to be set up in public. Comp. xxx. 8.——**With a common pen**] i.e., in large characters such as the common man can easily read (comp. Hab. ii. 2); they are opposed to the smaller, more cursive characters, such as only a 'learned' man can read (xxix. 11). Comp. on x. 19.——**Concerning . . .**] Lit., to . . . The form reminds us of the legends on seals, To—i.e., belonging to—such and such a person. The context, however, forbids such an explanation here. It is best to take the inscription as the heading or title of an as yet unwritten chapter of prophecy. In one sense, of course, the heading was itself a prediction—it pointed to a child, Maher-shalal-hash-baz, soon to be born. It would, of course, powerfully excite curiosity. As to the name itself, see on fourth verse.

2 **As credible witnesses**] When the prophecy involved in the name should be fulfilled, these two men of rank would be able to testify to its genuineness. Uriah may be the high-priest mentioned so unfavourably in 2 Kings xvi. 10, 11; this, however, is not certain, still less certain is Bertholdt and Bleek's identification of Zechariah with the (supposed) anonymous author of Zech. ix.–xi.

3 A living tablet, instead of the dead one.——**The prophetess**] i.e., the prophet's wife; a title of courtesy. So the wives of kings are called 'queens' and 'princesses' (xlix. 23, 1 Kings xi. 3, Cant. vi. 8), and so in the Mishna the priest's daughter or wife is called 'priestess.'

4 **Maher-shalal-hash-baz**] i.e., probably 'Swift (swiftly cometh) spoil, speedy (speedily cometh) prey.' Imitated by Goethe, in his Habebald—Eilebeute (*Faust*, act iv. sc. 3). It has been doubted whether the child can actually have borne such a name, but the analogies of Shear-Yashub, of the compound religious names in 1 Chr. iii. 20, iv. 3, xxv. 4, Ezra viii. 4, and of the names of the Assyrian kings, may dispel the doubt. It might of course have been shortened in every-day use, as Abijah was shortened into Abi, Jehoahaz into Ahaz, &c.—The prediction of Maher-shalal-hash-baz is not invested with such solemnity as that of Immanuel. But the two are in several respects allied. In both the birth of a child is the pledge of deliverance. In both the arrival of the child at a certain age is the signal for the fulfilment of the prophecy. Both, too, refer to the same event. True, a child can say Father and Mother

asmuch as this people hath rejected the waters of Shiloah which flow softly, and rejoice with Rezin and the son of Remaliah, [7] therefore, behold, the Lord bringeth upon them the waters of the river, mighty and great, [[a] the king of Assyria and all his glory [a];] and it shall mount over all its channels, and go over all its banks, [8] and shall sweep along into Judah, shall overflow and pass over, reaching even to the neck, and the stretching out of its wings shall fill the breadth of thy land,

[a] Omitted as interpolation by Ges., Hitz.

before it can clearly discern between good and evil. But then the position of the latter prophecy indicates that it was delivered rather later than that in chap. vii. In an inferior degree, therefore, the birth of Maher-shalal-hash-baz may be called a 'sign' (comp. viii. 18).

[6] **This people**] The phrase is most commonly applied to Judah (e.g., vi. 10, xxviii. 14, xxix. 13, Jer. viii. 5, xiii. 10), but in ix. 15 (16) is used of Israel, and in Jer. xxxiii. 24 it is even applied to the heathen neighbours of the Jews. We are therefore by no means shut up to the view of Ewald (entirely inconsistent with vii. 2) that most of the population of Jerusalem were in favour of the pretender Ben-Tabel (vii. 6), and wished well to the invading army. It is much more natural to suppose, with De Dieu, that 'this people' means N. Israel, Judah being first mentioned in *v.* 8. ——**Hath rejected the waters of Shiloah**] The prophets gloried in Jerusalem's not possessing large streams, as means of defence. They knew that Jehovah would supply the place of 'rivers and canals' (xxxiii. 21), and be like a stream, whose arms 'make glad the city of God' (Ps. xlvi. 4). The brook of Shiloah, therefore, which flowed past Zion and Moriah, became a type of the Temple and its almighty but gracious Lord. This is better than taking the phrase to symbolise 'the mild government of the Davidic family' (*I. C. A.*, p. 32), as it gives the usual religious sense to 'reject.' (Comp. Jer. xvii. 13, 'They have rejected the fountain of living waters, even Jehovah.')——**Rejoice** (in union) **with Rezin and the son of Remaliah**] The peculiar form of the phrase is determined by the wish for an alliteration—*mā'as* in the first clause, *māsōs* in the second.) *The whole passage refers primarily to Israel*, whose fault was rejecting Jehovah, the true king of Israel, and cleaving to Rezin and Pekah (comp. Hos. iii. 5). But this was also in part the fault of Judah. The latter, of course, rejected Rezin, but was far (to judge from the prophecies of Isaiah) from joyful attachment to Jehovah. Hence the punishment fell on Israel and Judah alike (comp. ix. 8). Instead of the beneficent overflow of the 'living waters' (Jer. xvii. 13, Ezek. xlvii. 1-12), the faithless land shall be flooded with the cruel soldiery of Assyria. But there is a difference in the fate of the two countries. Israel is swept away by the stream and absorbed; Judah, through Immanuel's help, emerges safely from the torrent.

[7] **Upon them**] i.e., upon the Israelites of the north. The image is based upon the annual inundations of the Euphrates. Comp. Jer. xlvii. 2.

[8] **And shall sweep along . . .**] Judah shall only escape for a time. He shall be overtaken by the torrent, and barely keep his head above the water (xxx. 28). Masses of water branching off, like wings, from the main current, shall cover the utmost extremities of the land. But Assyria shall not ultimately pre-

O Immanuel! [9] [b]Take knowledge,[b] O ye peoples,[c] and give ear, all ye distances of the earth: gird yourselves, but ye shall break down; gird yourselves, but ye shall break down; [10] devise a device, but it shall come to nought; speak a word, but it shall not stand, for 'With us is God.' [11] For thus said Jehovah unto me, with a strong pressure of the Hand, and

[b] So Sept., Lowth, Grätz. Text, Be enraged.
[c] Text inserts, but ye shall break down.

vail. The safety of Judah is secured, for its real though invisible lord is Immanuel, who shall emerge out of his obscurity, with supernaturally matured powers, when the time shall have come (comp. vii. 14).——**O Immanuel!**] An ejaculatory prayer for the Deliverer's advent.—The not unpleasing confusion of metaphors in *v.* 8 may be paralleled from Wordsworth:—

So shall its waters from the heaven supplied
. . . . . .
Brood o'er the long-parched lands with Nile-like wings.[1]

—Mr. Taylor thinks the fate of the Assyrians is described in *vv.* 21, 22 (see notes).

[9] At the thought of Immanuel, the prophet raises his tone. He challenges the combined nations, whether near as the Syrians and Israelites, or distant as the Assyrians, and announces their overthrow.——**Gird yourselves**] With your belt and weapons (see on xlv. 5). ——**Break down**] i.e., in dismay. Used again of Assyria, xxx. 31, xxxi. 9.

[10] **With us is God**] Comp. Ps. xlvi. 7, 11 (a contemporary writing?)

[11-15] A short oracle, complete in itself, and probably written down (so vigorous is the style) not long after the experience described. It has no reference to the invasion of Rezin and Pekah, as most critics have supposed (see on *v.* 12).—— **With a strong pressure . . .**] 'The Hand' (or, 'the Arm of Jehovah,' liii. 1) is a personification of the self-manifesting power of Jehovah (analogous to 'the Face of Jehovah'; see on lix. 2), with reference especially, though not exclusively, (see Ex. vi. 1) to the extraordinary deeds or words of the prophets. So in the story of Elijah (1 Kings xviii. 46) and Elisha (2 Kings iii. 15). It is probable enough that in ordinary Canaanitish phraseology the phrase was descriptive of a completely passive ecstatic state, in which the self-consciousness of the prophet was entirely asleep, and that it was retained by prophets of Jehovah, like Isaiah, as having in their case a comparative degree of propriety. It is not reasonable to suppose that Isaiah ever lost his self-consciousness:—that would have been a temporary suspension of his moral life. Fortunately, we have a prophecy of his in which he has described his state when under the prophetic impulse with pictorial vividness (chap. vi.). It is remarkable that Ezekiel, living in the decline of the higher prophecy, shows a preference for a form of speech, characteristic of the primitive stage, and rare among the greater prophets. See Ezek. i. 3, iii. 22, xxxvii. 1, and especially iii. 14, viii. 3. 'The Hand' only occurs again in Isaiah in xiv. 26, and according to Del. in xxviii. 2, which I doubt.——**The way of this people**] i.e., the low religious views of the Israelites (both of north and of south; see *v.* 14). Just as the Gospel-religion is called 'this way' in Acts ix. 2. Kocher (*Vindiciæ*, p. 64) asks, How could Isaiah be in danger of idolatry? But he seems to be here described as the head of a little society, some

[1] *Descriptive Sketches*, near the end.

warned me not to walk in the way of this people, saying, [12] Ye shall not call everything a [d]holy thing,[d] which this people calleth a [d]holy thing,[d] and the object of their fear ye shall not fear, nor account it dreadful. [13] Jehovah Sabáoth, him shall ye count holy, and let him be your fear, and him your dread. [14] And he shall [e]shew himself as holy,[e] and as a stone for striking against and a rock of stumbling to both the houses of Israel, as a gin and a snare to the inhabitants of Jerusalem: [15] and many [f]shall stumble at it,[f] and fall, and be broken, and snared, and taken.

[16] 'Bind thou up the admonition, seal the instruction among

[d] So Secker, Grätz, &c. Text, conspiracy.
[e] Be for a sanctuary, Ew., Del., Naeg., Weir.
[f] Among them shall stumble, Ew., Del., Naeg. (see crit. note).

of whom may have needed this exhortation more than Isaiah.

[12-14] **Ye shall not call everything . . .**] Isaiah and his disciples are addressed. The warning corresponds to that against necromancy in *v.* 19. There was to be no compromise between the worship of Jehovah and the rites and practices of a lower type of religion. Indeed, Jehovah would soon prove his exclusive right to the title of 'holy,' by the terrible ruin which, by their own fault, should overtake the two houses of Israel. He would be 'a stone of stumbling' to the unbelievers (comp. Luke xx. 18), but (as we may supply from xxviii. 16) a sure support to the faithful; and from the suddenness of his interposition should be like unto 'a gin and a snare' (Luke xxi. 35). No other view of this passage seems to me even plausible, and Grätz deserves much credit for having revived the forgotten emendation of Secker. Isaiah could not forbid his disciples to banish the word 'confederacy' (or rather 'conspiracy') from their vocabulary—for this is what the ordinary view (see *I. C. A.*, p. 32), amounts to—'this people' would not be likely to misapply such a word; while the theory of Roorda, Del., and Kay, that the court party accused Isaiah and his friends of having conspired (comp. Am. vii. 10), is refuted by the simple observation already made above, that not the opponents, but the disciples, of Isaiah are the persons here addressed.

[14] **Shew himself as holy**] Lit. 'become a hallowed thing;'—become = shew himself as, 1 Sam. iv. 9. Alt. rend. is against the connection, and if sanctuary = asylum, against usage.

[16] **Bind thou up . . .**] 'But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words, and seal the book to the time of the end,' Dan. xii. 4, comp. viii. 26. This parallel passage shows who the speaker is, viz., Jehovah, who enjoins the prophet not to trust so important an oracle to the memory alone, but to write it down (this is implied, as in Dan. *l. c.*), and lay it up, carefully bound and sealed, among his disciples (com. xxx. 8). So already the Targum. 'Jehovah's disciples' are of course Isaiah's disciples, whose relation to the highest of teachers has been already recognised by the plural form of the address in *v.* 12; comp. liv. 13.——**The admonition**] The word rendered 'to testify,' 'admonish,' or 'solemnly declare,' is often used of Jehovah and the prophets, e.g., Ps. l. 7, Deut. viii. 19.——**The instruction**] i.e., the prophetic teaching or revelation (see on i. 10), referring here to the oracle in

my disciples'. . . . [17] And I will wait for Jehovah, who hideth his face from the house of Jacob, and hope in him. [18] Behold, I and the children whom Jehovah hath given me are for signs and for omens in Israel from Jehovah Sabáoth who dwelleth on mount Zion. [19] And when they shall say unto you, 'Resort to the necromancers and the wizards, that chirp and that mutter'. . . . [g]Should not people resort to their God? on behalf of the living (should they apply to) the dead?[g] [20] To

[g] (Do not the people always resort to their gods, instead of the living to the dead?). Ew.

vv. 12–15. There is surely nothing to indicate a 'primary' reference to the Mosaic law.

[17] **And I will wait . . .**] Isaiah is evidently the speaker, but how strangely abrupt is his language! We should at least have expected, 'And as for me, I will wait,' &c., and even this would be only a degree less abrupt. Has not a verse dropped out between *vv.* 16 and 17? Considering the unsatisfactory state of the remainder of the chapter, the supposition cannot be called a violent one. An attempt has indeed been made to bridge over *vv.* 16 and 17 by supposing that the prophet speaks in his own person in both verses (so Kimchi, Drechsler, Del., Perowne). As Dr. Perowne puts it,[1] in the former verse he utters a command, or a petition; in the latter, he declares his own attitude in reference to it. But in either case, it seems impossible to make sense of 'in my disciples.' Were the passage a command of Isaiah, we should expect 'O my disciples;' were it a petition, 'in the hearts of my disciples' (comp. li. 7, Prov. vii. 3). Del., indeed, supposes the latter to be the meaning of the existing text; but it is doubtful whether even the fuller form suggested would admit the desired interpretation.

[18] Isaiah confirms his faith by the thought that he and his children are divinely appointed. **Signs and omens**] The meaning is plain from Ezek. xii. 11, 'Say, I am your omen; like as I have done, so shall it be done unto them; they shall remove and go into captivity;' and from Zech. iii. 8, where the high priest Joshua and his fellows are called 'men of omen.' The conception is, that God selects certain men to be shadows or types of still greater men or things to come. By the prophetic announcements of their birth, and by their divinely appointed significant names (*nomen omen*), the two children of Isaiah were living prophecies: and so, too, by his steadfast faith, by his symbolic acts (see on xx. 3), and perhaps by circumstances in his life not known to us, was Isaiah himself.[2] The last words of the verse evidently close a section, and confirm the impression that the preceding passage is incomplete.

[19] The prophet warns his disciples not to give way to the solicitations of the soothsaying party. The apodosis, however, is wanting. Either it has been lost, or, like Paul on similar occasions, the prophet breaks off from inner excitement. From the beginning of the sentence, 'And when they shall say unto you,' we may infer that he meant to conclude with something like 'Hearken not unto them.' See on *v.* 20. ——**Resort to the necromancers . . .**] Necromancy and magic

[1] *Sermons* (1874); Exposition of Isa. viii. 16–ix. 7.

[2] We might add the significant name of Isaiah himself = 'salvation (is) Jehovah.' But such names were not uncommon, comp. Joshua, Hosaiah, Elishua.

the instruction and to the admonition! [h]Surely they shall speak according to this word when there is no dawning for them.[h] [22] And he shall look unto the earth, and behold, distress and darkness, gloom of affliction, and [1]thick darkness driven (upon him);[1] [21] and he shall pass through it hard-prest and hungry; and it shall come to pass, when he is hungry,

[h] So Weir. Surely &c., who have no daybreak, Ew.—If they speak not thus, they are a people for whom there is no daybreak, Del.

[1] Into darkness is he driven, Ew. (Text uncertain.)

were prevalent in the time of Isaiah (see on v. 11), as they were still later in the time of Josiah; for a list of varieties of them, see Deut. xviii. 10, 11. A vivid picture of a necromantic consultation is given in 1 Sam. xxviii. 1–20.——**That chirp and that mutter**] i.e., that imitate the 'squeaking and gibbering' of ghosts; comp. xxix. 4; *Il.* xxiii. 101; *Æn.* vi. 492; Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, i. 408. 'Chirping' reminds us first of all of birds, and in the Babylonian Legend of Ishtar (line 10), the spirits are compared to birds.[1] It may also allude to the voice of children, and H. Spencer quotes a passage about the Zulu diviners, 'The voice (of the supposed spirits), was like that of a very little child.' According to LXX., the phrase is descriptive of ventriloquism (as if *obh* = 'bottle'). 'Read Captain Lyons' account of the scene in the cabin with the Esquimaux bladder or conjurer; it is impossible not to be reminded of the Witch of Endor' (Coleridge). ——**Should not people resort to their God?**] This and the following words seem to me a parenthetical remark of the prophet, half serious, half ironical. To take them as a reply suggested for Isaiah's disciples is surely rather forced; they sound more like the words of an interested bystander. 'Their God,' as opposed to human mediators. 'The dead' does not here mean idol-gods (as Ps. cvi. 28), but the spirits of the dead (see Deut. xviii. 11).

[20] **To the instruction . . .**] i.e., Let us rather build our hopes on the true revelation! In form, the words remind us of Judg. vii. 18, 'To Jehovah and to Gideon!'——**Surely they shall speak . . .**] 'The general import of this and the following verses cannot be mistaken; but the language is so compressed and elliptical that it is not easy to make out the meaning and connection of several of the clauses... The second clause admits of two legitimate renderings: If they speak not thus, or, Surely they shall speak thus. The objection to the former rendering is that the prophet had already supposed them to speak quite otherwise (*v.* 19) . . . The latter is therefore much more appropriate. The time will come when even *they* who had once despised the law and the testimony shall turn to it in despair.' So, rightly (as I think), Dr. Weir, comparing, for the use of the relative pronoun for the relative adverb 'when,' Deut. xi. 6, Ps. cxxxix. 15, Deut. i. 31, 2 Sam. xiv. 15; and for the sentiment, Ps. cvii. 11–14, lxxviii. 34. But though the former despisers of revelation turn to it now in despair, it does not follow that their appeal to Jehovah is in vain. We might, indeed, expect that it should be so, comp. xxviii. 19, Am. viii. 11, 12; but ix. 1, 2 tells a different tale.——**Dawning**] = hope of better days, comp. lix. 9, 10.

[21] This and the following verses form the most difficult part of the

[1] Comp. quotations in H. Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*, p. 356.

that he shall be deeply angered, and curse his king and his god, and shall look upwards.

CHAPTER IX.

Vv. 1–7. The conclusion of the prophecy. The mystery in the dealings of Jehovah with His people shall be cleared up. The light of His favour shall return, and those parts of the land of Israel which bore the first brunt of Assyrian hostility shall be proportionately glorified. For the Messiah shall appear, and bring the tyranny of Israel's foes to an end. Under him the empire of David shall be restored on an indestructible foundation.—The tenses in the Hebr. are 'factitive,' or perhaps prophetic perfects.

[1] Surely there is (now) no (more) gloom to her whose lot was affliction. At the former time he brought shame on the

prophecy. They are not only obscure in themselves, but, at first sight at least, inconsistent with the opening verses of chap. ix. Here, hopeless gloom and distress; there, light and prosperity. How are these two opposite descriptions to be reconciled? The easiest way is probably that adopted above, which was suggested by Dr. Siegfried.[1] It involves, no doubt, a transposition, but this is no novelty in critical editions of ancient texts. Mr. Taylor's ingenious theory[2] (partly anticipated by A. E.), that *vv.* 21, 22 are a continuation of *vv.* 7, 8, and describe the fate of the Assyrian invaders (*vv.* 9–20 being a digression suggested by the words Immanu El), must, I almost fear, be rejected, because the picture in *vv.* 21, 22 is so much more suitable to a people suffering from invasion than to the invaders, and because it so evidently contrasts with the vision of light in chaps. ix. 1, 2.[3]

22. 21 The unfortunate Jews look first downward to the earth, and then upward to heaven. No cheering sight meets them below; we are not yet told what vision meets their eyes when they turn them towards heaven. (See crit. note).——**And he shall look . . .**] viz., the people personified. For the change of person (in the preceding verse in the Hebr.), comp. x. 4, &c.——**Through it**] i.e., through the earth (see *v.* 22).——**Hungry**] Famine being a frequent consequence of invasion, see on xxx. 23, and Lev. xxvi. 26.——**Curse his king and his god**] Who have failed him in the hour of his need, ii. 20. 'King' and 'god' are synonymous (as Am. v. 26, Hebr.).

[1] **Surely there is (now) no (more) gloom . . .**] Alluding to the expressions in viii. 21. The mute petition of the upturned eye has been granted. In a moment the condition of Israel is reversed. The

[1] *Zeitschrift für wissenschaftliche Theologie*, 1872, p. 280.
[2] *Journal of Philology*, vol. vi. pp. 149–159.
[3] I do not argue against Mr. Taylor on the ground of the length of the digression. There seem to be several instances of insertions being made by the prophetic writers themselves, owing to after-thoughts. Take e.g., xlii. 1–7. As Duhm has pointed out, xlii. 8 fits on much better to the end of chap. xli. than to the verse which now precedes it. Mr. Taylor will observe that I have spoken above with some hesitation. I wish to allow room for the possibility that a passage has fallen out of the text before *v.* 21, which accounted for and led up to the description of the Assyrians (*ex hyp.*) in *vv.* 21, 22.

land of Zebulun and on the land of Naphtali, but in the latter
he hath brought honour on the way by the sea, the other side
of Jordan, the district of the nations. [2] The people that walk
in darkness see a great light; they that dwell in the land of
deep shade, light shineth brilliantly upon them. [3] Thou hast
multiplied [a] the nation, even unto it thou hast given great joy: [a]
they rejoice before thee as with the joy in the harvest, as
men exult when they divide spoil. [4] For the yoke of his
burden, and the staff of his back, the rod of his task-master,
thou hast broken, as on the day of Midian. [5] For every boot

[a] So most moderns, with Heb. margin, MSS., Pesh., Targ.—Exultation, thou hast increased joy, Selwyn, &c. (conj.). Text reads, 'not increased (=removed) joy;' so Hengst., Kay.

clouds are lifted, and a brilliant day dawns suddenly (as in lx. 1). 'To her,' i.e., to Palestine, where a hard-pressed remnant of Israelites have been 'walking in darkness.'——**The land of Zebulun and on the land of Naphtali**] i.e., the later Upper and Lower Galilee. These were the districts despoiled by Tiglath-Pileser, 2 Kings xv. 29, comp. Zech. x. 10. Isaiah does not mean that these parts shall enjoy more prosperity than others, but that the contrast between the past and the present shall be greater in their case than in others. All Israel shall rejoice, but those parts which have suffered longest shall rejoice most. ——**The way by the sea**] i.e., the district on the W. of the Sea of Galilee, as opposed to 'the other side of Jordan,' and the 'circle of the nations,' i.e., the frontier districts nearest to Phœnicia, including 'the land of Cabul' (1 Kings ix. 11–13), which formed part of the later Upper Galilee. *Via Maris*, M. Renan observes, was the name of the high road from Acre to Damascus, as late as the Crusades. 'Way,' however, here means region, comp. lviii. 12, Job xxiv. 4; 'the sea,' is the Sea of Galilee (John vi. 1), called the Sea of Kinnereth (Num. xxxiv. 11).

[2] **Shineth brilliantly**] See on lxii. 1.

[3] **Multiplied the nation**] A supernatural increase of the population is a frequent feature in Messianic descriptions, see xxvi. 15, 18, 19, Jer. xxxi. 27, Ezek. xxxvi. 11. ——**Unto it**] The pronoun is placed first — not for emphasis ('though all the chances were against him,' Drechsler)—but for the euphony of the Hebrew. For similar cases see, in the Hebr., 1 Sam. ii. 3 (K'ri), Ps. vii. 14, lxiii. 9, cxxxix. 17, Jer. xxxi. 8. Selwyn's emendation is plausible, but rather weakens the passage.——**Before thee**] Alluding to the sacrificial meals, comp. xxv. 6, and see Deut. xii. 7, 12, 18, xiv. 26. But the phraseology has received a deeper meaning. It is the presence of Jehovah on which their joy depends (Vitr.).—— **When they divide spoil**] comp. xxxiii. 23, Ps. cxix. 162.

[4] **Thou hast broken**] Through the Messiah, as a second and greater Gideon.——**The yoke of his burden**] i.e., the yoke which burdened him. ——**The staff of his back**] i.e., the staff with which he was beaten.——**His task-master**] Lit. his driver. Same word and idiom in Ex. v. 6.——**The day of Midian**] 'Day' = battle, whether this lasts one day or more, as frequently in Arabic. Comp. x. 17.

[5] Isaiah wishes to describe the permanence of Israel's redemption. As long as war exists, there must

of him that trampeth [b] noisily, and the cloak rolled in blood, are for burning, the fuel of fire. 6 For a child is born unto us, a son is given unto us, and the government resteth upon his back, and his name is called, Wonder-Counsellor, God-

[b] In the tumult, Del.

be conquest and slavery. Hence war must be destroyed; the very emblems of war broken for ever (comp. Milton, 'Ode on the Nativity'). So Zech. ix. 10, Ezek. xxxix. 9, Ps. xlvi. 9 (10), lxxvi. 3 (?), where, however, the emblems mentioned are the various weapons, whereas here we have the military boot and cloak. The selection is a happy one, as it lends itself to a strikingly picturesque contrast. We are shown first the warrior stalking along in his blood-stained cloak and boots well set with nails (Juven. *Sat.* iii. 247, 8), and seeming to shake the earth with his sounding tread; then both cloak and boots supplying fuel for a bonfire. Homeric vigour and simplicity. ——**Rolled in blood**] Sometimes explained as a metaphor, crimson being the colour of the military cloak, comp. Nah. ii. 4, Matt. xxvii. 28. But it is better taken literally. The prophets do not mince their language in depicting Israel's enemies, comp. lxiii. 2, 3, Rev. xix. 13.

6 A further security for the permanence of the redemption. A prince of a new 'order' has arisen, with supernatural qualities and privileges.——**A child is born unto us**] We must not separate this passage from the context, and infer that the Messiah had, according to the prophet, already been born at the date of the delivery or writing down of this discourse. The prophet is unrolling a picture of the future, and each part of it is introduced with a 'factitive' perfect tense. He is designedly vague; the word rendered 'child' (*yéled*), will serve equally well for a newborn infant (Ex. i. 17, ii. 3, 6), and for a youth or young man (Gen. xlii. 22). It is, therefore, quite uncertain what interval is to elapse between the birth of the child and his public manifestation as the Messiah. We are not told anything about his origin; it is only an inference that he was expected to come from the Davidic family. The prophet is entirely absorbed in his wonderful character and achievements.——**The government**] Not that of Israel and Judah alone but, as the parallel passage Mic. v. 3–5 shows, that of the world. A small world, it may be said, was the *orbis Hebræis notus*, but probably it did not seem such to Isaiah: 'conosciuto il mondo Non cresce anzi si scema' (Leopardi).——**Upon his back**] Government being regarded as a burden—comp. vizier (*wezîr*) = burdened. See xxii. 22. **And his name is called**] This, of course, is not intended to be taken literally. It is a striking way of expressing the character of the subject, name and character standing in such close relation in the Oriental mind; other examples occur in i. 26, vii. 14 (probably), lx. 14, Jer. xi. 16, xxiii. 6, Ezek. xlviii. 35. There is also no doubt an allusion to the custom of assuming a new name on ascending the throne (comp. 2 Kings xxiii. 34, xxiv. 17). The length of the name in the present instance may be intended to suggest the extraordinary character of its bearer. It reminds us of the long honorific names of Egyptian kings (e.g., in the Treaty of Peace, *Records of the Past*, iv. 27, where the royal titles of Rameses II. take up six lines). As to the exegesis of the details, three views have a special claim to be mentioned. Luzzatto, a great Jewish scholar (died 1865), puts the name of the Child into a sentence, and renders 'Decreta prodigi Iddio potente, il

Mighty-One, [c] Everlasting-Father,[c] Prince-of-Peace; [7] for the increase of the government and for peace without end, upon

[c] Father (i.e. giver) of booty, Hitz., Kuenen, R. Martineau.

sempre padre, il signor della pace.' This is, at least, plausible. It can be supported by the analogy of many Hebrew names (see my 'Index of Proper Names, with Explanations,' in Eyre & Spottiswoode's *Teacher's Bible*), and by the Assyrian and Babylonian royal names, nine out of ten of which form a complete sentence. But the meaning which it gives is unnatural. If the intention is to emphasise the Divine wisdom, why accumulate epithets of God which do not contribute to that object? And above all, why employ the participle instead of the usual verbal form, viz., the imperfect or perfect? But Luzzatto is right on one important point, viz., that all which follows the words 'And his name is called,' constitutes a single name. Del., though very instructive on other points, seems to me clearly wrong on this. He thinks (with the older commentators), that the Messiah here receives not merely one but five names, 'Wonder, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace,' thus avoiding the necessity of supposing what he calls a 'sesquipedalian' name, though certainly the length of the name may be paralleled from 1 Chr. xxv. 4, and is sufficiently justified on the grounds mentioned above. He derives a further argument in favour of his view from the reply of the Angel of Jehovah to Manoah in Judg. xiii. 18—a rather doubtful argument, however, since the Angel does not say that his name is 'Wonderful,' but actually refuses to tell it, 'seeing that it is wonderful' (i.e., unspeakable). Three considerations seem to me conclusive against Del., (1) that there is no analogy for such an accumulation of names as he supposes; (2) that Isaiah leads us to expect a name, and not names; and (3) that the several titles are arranged in a significant order (see below).—It is much more reasonable to hold, with Ewald, that we have here 'two pairs of compound names united, describing the character of the Messiah first from within and then from without' (*I. C. A.*, p. 33). Thus, 'Wonderful-Counsellor' is parallel to 'Everlasting-Father'; both titles describe what the Messiah is at home. 'God the Hero' is parallel to 'Prince of Peace'; both titles express the ability of the Messiah in working out his plans beyond the limits of his hereditary state.——**Wonder-Counsellor**] i.e., either 'one who deviseth things which are wonderful' (for the idiom, comp. xxii. 2 Hebr.), or 'wonder of a counsellor' (idiom as 'wild ass of a man,' Gen. xvi. 12). The latter meaning is at once linguistically the more obvious (the natural Hebr. equivalent of the former will be found in xxviii. 29, Del.), and much the more forcible. 'Wonder-Counsellor' = one who as a counsellor is entirely wonderful. Any king might be called a counsellor, a man of practical counsel, but here is one whose political sagacity is a phenomenon which can neither be described nor comprehended. ('Wonder' is a word specially used with reference to the Divine, see Judg. xiii. 18, Ex. xv. 11, Ps. lxxvii. 11, lxxviii. 11; and comp. Isa. xxix. 14). Isaiah has a strong sense of the importance of this quality in a ruler; in his second sketch of the Messiah he again lays the chief stress on his supernatural 'wisdom and understanding' (xi. 2)——**God the Mighty One**] 'Mighty,' that is, against His enemies (xlii. 13). The meaning of the phrase is defined by x. 21, where it occurs again of Jehovah. It would be rash to infer that Isaiah held the metaphysical oneness of the Messiah with Jehovah,

the throne of David and throughout his kingdom, in establishing and supporting it by justice and by righteousness from

but he evidently does conceive of the Messiah, somewhat as the Egyptians, Assyrians and Babylonians regarded their kings, as an earthly representation of Divinity (see on xiv. 13, 14). No doubt this development of the Messianic doctrine was accelerated by contact with foreign nations; still it is in harmony with fundamental Biblical ideas and expressions. This particular title of the Messiah is no doubt unique. But if even a Davidic king may be described as 'sitting upon the throne of Jehovah' (1 Chr. xxix. 23), and the Davidic family be said, in a predictive passage it is true, to be 'as God (*Elōhīm*), as the (or, an) angel of Jehovah' (Zech. xii. 8),[1] much more may similar titles be applied to the Messiah. The last comparison would, indeed, be especially suitable to the Messiah, and it is a little strange that we do not find it. But we do find the Messiah, in a well-known Psalm, invited to sit at the right hand of Jehovah[2] (Ps. cx. 1), and it is only a step further to give him the express title, 'God the Mighty One.' It is no doubt a very great title. The word selected for 'God' is not *Elōhīm*, which is applied to the judicial authority (Ex. xxi. 6, xxii. 8); to Moses, Ex. vii. 1, and to the apparition of Samuel, 1 Sam. xxviii. 13; but *El*, which whenever it denotes (as it generally does, and in Isaiah always), Divinity, does so in an absolute sense:—it is never used hyperbolically or metaphorically. There is very little, I think, to be said for the other renderings of the phrase;—the notes of Drechsler and Knobel may be consulted.——**Everlasting Father**] 'Father,' because the Messiah will rule in a fatherly manner. Job was 'a father to the poor' (xxix. 16); Eliakim is to be 'a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem' (Isa. xxii. 21). 'Everlasting,' because one who is in such close relation with Jehovah must be, like Jehovah (lvii. 15), everlasting. Among the titles of Rameses II. (referred to above), is this—'endowed with life eternal and for ever' (Goodwin's translation). Much more, thinks the prophet, can this be said of Jehovah's chosen one. Were the Messiah to cease to be, how could the Lord's people maintain its ground? Through the Messiah's posterity? But his posterity might degenerate.—This view is not only in itself the worthiest, but also required by the parallelism. See above. Dathe's explanation, 'possessor of the attribute of eternity,' is based on a purely Arabic idiom (see Ewald, *Lehrbuch der hebr. Sprache*, § 273 *b*). Hitzig's and Knobel's 'winner, or distributor, of booty,' is against the parallelism, and out of harmony with the religious character of the passage. Surely the spoil of the enemies of Jehovah would have been made a *khérem*, and been destroyed (comp. 1 Sam. xv.)——**Prince of Peace**] Comp. Mic. v. 5, 'And this man shall be Peace;' Zech. ix. 10, 'he shall speak peace to the nations.' Such is the prophetic ideal of Israelitish royalty, in striking contrast to the false ideal represented by Assyria.

[7] The Messiah's object—the extension and peaceful establishment

[1] I do not venture to quote Ps. xlv. 6, 'Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever.' That a king of Israel or even of Judah should be addressed in these terms seems to me in the highest degree improbable on account of the context. See, however, Riehm's remarks in square brackets in the posthumous edition of Hupfeld's *Psalmen*, iii. 439. (I agree myself with Olshausen and Reuss, see *Q. P. B. ad loc.*)

[2] This is, I am aware, not the explanation which has become traditional among liberal critics. But even on the view that the Davidic king is referred to, the passage retains its illustrative value. For if the king could be so addressed, much more could the Messiah.

henceforth even for ever. The jealousy of Jehovah Sabáoth will perform this.

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8 The Lord hath sent a word into Jacob, and it hath fallen

of the Davidic kingdom. The second member of the verse is logically as well as rhythmically parallel to the first. **The throne of David** is the seat of the 'government' (*v.* 6), and **his kingdom** is the scene of the 'endless peace.' Ewald's rendering, 'on behalf of David's throne' &c., is therefore less suitable. The mention of David seems to imply that the Messiah was to be one of that king's descendants.——**From henceforth even for ever**] Two meanings are exegetically possible (*I. C. A.*, p. 34); 1. that the Messiah shall live an immortal life on earth, and, 2. that there shall be an uninterrupted succession of princes of his house. The latter is favoured by 2 Sam. vii. 12–16; comp. Ps. xxi. 4, lxi. 6, 7; but the former seems to me more in accordance with the general tenor of the description. See on 'Everlasting Father,' *v.* 6.——**The jealousy . . .**] Jealousy is the affectional manifestation of the Divine holiness. The holiness of Jehovah, and his exclusive right to objects which have been consecrated to his service, is maintained, in Biblical language, by the Divine 'jealousy.' Holiness and jealousy are co-ordinate terms. Hence Josh. xxiv. 19, 'He (Jehovah) is an all-holy God; he is a jealous God'; hence, too, the name of Jehovah can be said to be 'Jealous;' Ex. xxxiv. 14. See Oehler, *Old Test. Theology*, i. 165–8.

IX. 8–X. 4. An unusually artistic prophecy, the four stanzas, or strophes, of which are not only equal in length, but marked by the recurrence of the refrain in *vv.* 12, 17, 21 (comp. Psalms xlii., xliii.). It announces a judgment on the whole of Israel, but especially on the northern kingdom. There is a question whether the past tenses in the first three strophes are entirely historical (Ew.), or partly historical, partly prophetic (Hitz., Knob., Del.). 'The prophet places himself,' remarks Del., 'at a time when judgment upon judgment has passed upon all Israel, without producing any amendment. . . . How much or how little of what the prophet surveys from his "ideal" position has really taken place, cannot be determined.' Ewald's view, adopted in *I. C. A.*, still seems to me the more probable one, as it is certainly the more consistent. The change from the past to the future seems to me clearly indicated by the form of expression in x. 3, 4. Ewald is further of opinion that ix. 8–x. 4 originally came between v. 25 and v. 26–30. To this also I must still adhere. No one can accuse this view of audacity who recollects how frequently passages in manuscripts are misplaced. The scribe left out something by accident (e.g., xxxviii. 21, 22), could not afford to rewrite his work, and so put in the missing passage at the most convenient place.—In *I. C. A.*, p. 5, I have shown cause for dating ix. 8–x. 4 earlier than chaps. ii.–v., viz. in the reign of Jotham (see on *v.* 21). Probably ix. 8–x. 4 was written first, then ii. 2–v. 24 was put into its final shape, and connected with the independent prophecy, ix. 8, &c., by means of v. 25, whilst v. 26–30 were added last of all (note the reference to Assyria) to form a suitable conclusion to the whole volume.

8 **Hath sent a word**] The word of Jehovah personified; Ps. cvii. 20, cxlvii. 15; comp. John xii. 48, Hebr. iv. 12. Self-fulfilling; Isa. lv. 11, Jer. i. 9, v. 14, comp. Num. xxiii. 25.——**It hath fallen**] Comp. Dan. iv. 31, Zech. ix. 1, and Mohammed's expression (Sur. lxxvii. 23, &c.), *anzála*, 'he hath sent down,' i.e., revealed.——**Israel**] i.e., the whole nation, as generally in the prophets, till N. Israel fell, and thus Israel

in Israel, [9] and the whole people shall know it, Ephraim and the inhabitants of Samaria, in spite of (their) pride and arrogance in saying, [10] Bricks are fallen down, but with hewn stones will we build up; sycamores have been cut down, but cedars will we put in their place. [11] But Jehovah exalted against him the [d] princes of Rezin, and spurred his enemies on, [12] Aram before and Philistia behind, and they devoured Israel with open mouth. In spite of all this, his anger turned not away, and his hand was stretched out still.—[13] But the people turned not unto him who smote him, and unto Jehovah Sabáoth they did not resort. [14] So Jehovah cut off from Israel

[d] So some MSS., Ew., Weir.—Text, adversaries.

became practically identical with Judah.

[9] **Shall know it**] i.e., by experience; comp. v. 19, Hos. ix. 7, Job xxi. 19, and Koràn, xl. 72: 'They who treat the Book as a lie . . . shall know hereafter.'——**Ephraim**] i.e., especially Ephraim; like 'Judah and Jerusalem,' ii. 1. ——**In spite of (their) pride**] This is the first transgression of the northern kingdom.

[10] **Bricks have fallen down**] Alluding perhaps to the tribute imposed upon Israel by Raman-Nirari and Tiglath-Pileser.—For the form of the speech, comp. Mal. i. 4. Sun-dried bricks were probably then as now the common material of houses in Palestine; comp. Job iv. 19, 'hewn stones' being reserved for kings and nobles; comp. 1 Kings vii. 9, Am. v. 11.——**Sycamores**] The commonest tree in the lowlands of Palestine, still much used in building.——**Cedars**] Purchased at a great price from the Phœnicians (comp. 1 Kings x. 27).

[11] It is doubtful whether the 'past tenses' are historical or expressive of prophetic confidence. ——**Exalted**] i.e., placed in a position of superiority, as Ps. xx. 1 (2). ——**The princes of Rezin**] The text-reading fails to make sense. It can only mean the Assyrians (comp. 2 Kings xvi. 9), but the next verse makes it clear that the prophet refers rather to the Syrians. Besides, we want something in the first clause nearly equivalent to 'his (Israel's, not Rezin's) enemies' in the second. ——**Against him**] viz. Israel.

[12] **Aram before . . .**] Knobel infers that the Syrians and Philistines were compelled by Tiglath-Pileser, immediately after being conquered, to furnish auxiliaries for his expedition against Israel. But this, as Diestel observes, is extremely improbable, and does not agree with the statement that the attack proceeds from the east and west. Delitzsch, with a keener sense of the connection, finds here a prediction of injuries to N. Israel from Syria, and to Judah from the Philistines. But he still ascribes the impulse in the former case to Assyria, in order to explain 'the adversaries of Rezin.' It is surely more natural to assign the prophecy to which this passage belongs to the period preceding the league of Rezin and Pekah. Rezin's policy was to force first Israel and then Judah into alliance with him against Assyria. Israel and Judah both resisted; the resistance of the former has found its only permanent record in Isaiah. The Philistines had the double stimulus of hereditary enmity to Israel and dread of Assyria. Their territory extended on the north to the frontier of the Israelitish kingdom.

[13, 14] Israel continues impenitent,

head and tail, palm-branch and rush, in one day. 15 e [The elder and the honourable, he is the head; and the prophet who teacheth lies, he is the tail.][e] 16 And the guides of this people became misleading, and its guided ones lost men. 17 Therefore Jehovah [f]spared not[f] its young men, and upon its orphans and its widows he had no compassion, for everyone was profane and an evil-doer, and every mouth was speaking profanity. In spite of all this, his anger turned not away, and his hand was stretched out still.

18 For unrighteousness burned like fire, consuming thorns and briars, and kindled in the thickets of the forest, so that they rolled upwards in a volume of smoke. 19 By the fury of Jehovah Sabáoth the land was burned up, and the people became as fuel of fire; they had no pity for each other. 20 And one devoured on the right hand, and was hungry (still); and

[e] Omitted as gloss by Ew., Kuenen, &c.
[f] So Lagarde (conj.).—Text, rejoiced not (in).

and is punished by a 'day' (i.e., battle, see on *v.* 4) in which many lives are lost: what battle is intended we cannot now say.

14 **Palm-branch and rush**] A proverbial expression = high and low (LXX. has *μέγαν καὶ μικρόν*); comp. xix. 15. The palm-branch receives its name in Hebr. (lit. palm of the hand) from its upward bend. The rush is an emblem of humiliation; lviii. 5.

15 It is difficult to defend the genuineness of this verse. The false prophets, being leaders of the people, ought to belong to the 'head.' Besides, the verse makes the stanza or strophe too long by a verse. Hence most critics since Koppe have included it in the list of intrusive marginal glosses. The natural explanation of the figures in *v.* 14 is given in *v.* 16; the 'guides' are the 'head,' the 'guided' are the 'tail.'

16 **Misleading**] Here in a political sense, as the context shows. ——**Lost men**] Lit. swallowed up —not here figuratively (in a 'sea of troubles,' or in Sheól), but simply = destroyed, as iii. 12, xxv. 7, 8.

17 A variation on the theme of *vv.* 13–16. The flower of the population shall perish, as a judgment upon their impiety.——**Young men**] The word is generally used with reference to military service.——**Orphans . . . widows**] Elsewhere represented as the objects of peculiar care. Dr. Weir continues: 'he cannot pity,' he is compelled to restrain his compassion, giving the imperfect a potential force; see Driver, *Hebrew Tenses*, § 37 (*a*).

18 The third transgression—'an unrighteousness which like burning fire seizes upon and destroys everything, both high and low, in the nation' (Ewald). As no class is free from the infection of anarchy, so none can escape its natural and self-developed as well as divinely-willed punishment. The lawlessness of the one punishes the lawlessness of the other. There is the same figure and almost the same sentiment in xxxiii. 11; comp. on v. 18.——**Thorns and briars**] Emblems of the wicked, as 2 Sam. xxiii. 6. There is a *verbal* parallel in x. 17, 18.

19, 20 General anarchy, connected

ate on the left, and was not satisfied, every one eating the flesh of his own arm—[21] Manasseh Ephraim, and Ephraim Manasseh—and they were together against Judah. In spite of all this, his anger turned not away, and his hand was stretched out still.

CHAPTER X.

[1] Woe unto those who inscribe decisions of injustice, and to the writers who register oppression, [2] turning aside from judgment the weak, and tearing away the right of the afflicted of my people, making widows their spoil, and orphans their prey. [3] What then will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the crashing ruin which cometh from far? to whom will ye flee for help, and where will ye leave your glory? [4] [a] Except he crouch under the captives, and they fall under the slain! [a] In spite of all this, his anger is not turned away, and his hand is stretched out still.

[a] Except &c., they will fall under the slain, Hitz.—Beltis is bowed down, Osiris is broken down (?), Lagarde.

probably with the revolution which placed Pekah on the throne; 2 Kings xv. 23–25.

[20] **Everyone eating . . .**] Comp. xlix. 26, Zech. xi. 9. A figure either for the insane fury which destroys itself, or for the cruelty of rival factions (Ges.). In the latter case, 'arm' = helper, as xxxiii. 2, Ps. lxxxiii. 9; comp. parallels from the Arabic and Syriac in Gesen. *Thes.*, p. 433*b*. The religious union of the tribes being dissolved, they were abandoned to the disintegrating tendency common to the less civilised Semitic populations.

[21] A common jealousy unites the northern tribes against Judah. Possibly there is an allusion to the incursions described in 2 Kings xv. 37, 2 Chr. xxviii. 6–15.

X. 1. The last strophe, or stanza, chastises the tyranny of corrupt officials. Here, as it seems, the prophet has the condition of Judah principally in mind. The transition seems to us abrupt, but its possibility is established by viii. 6–14 and xxviii. 1–6. The division between north and south was, in fact, not recognised by the prophets of Isaiah's age. Comp. viii. 14: 'both the houses of Israel.'—**Inscribe**] Lit. carve; see on xxx. 8. 'The carving and writing is mentioned to indicate that the various legal forms were carefully attended to, whilst the law itself was trampled under foot' (Dr. Weir).

[3] **What then will ye do . . .**] Ironical. Such bold defiance of God would be impossible without an ally or a place of deposit for your treasures.

[4] **Except he crouch . . .**] The answer to the question in *v.* 3. This is the only place where the Jewish nobles can hide their head or deposit their glory. Alt. rend. is the only other possible one of the text as it stands. They must either accept captivity in a crowded prison, or fall by an indiscriminate massacre (comp. xiv. 19). The text-reading is certainly difficult, but not ungrammatical, and not inconsistent with Isaiah's style and thought. Lagarde's conjecture, brilliant as it is, is inferior in suitability. See crit. note.

CHAPTER X. 5—XII. 6.

THIS, as Ewald remarks, is the first discourse of Isaiah's aimed directly and solely against the Assyrians. To the people of Judah it is almost entirely favourable; once only (x. 22), does the prophet glance at the terrible fate of unbelieving Jews. It falls into two parts, the one (x. 5–34), describing the moral and spiritual antecedents of the Assyrian invasion (from which—see on *v.* 22—the Judahites are already suffering, and the great overthrow reserved for the foe;) the other (xi. 1–xii. 6), the blessed state of Israel and the world under the Messianic king, when all shall recognise one standard of spiritual morality, when the scattered members of the nation, and even distant peoples, shall gather to Jerusalem as the centre of religious unity. Two bursts of lyric song, put into the mouths of the reunited nation, close the prophecy.

There are several remarkable points of contact between this prophecy and chaps. xxviii. and xxix.: comp. x. 12 with xxviii. 21; x. 22 with xxviii. 22; x. 26 with xxviii. 15, 18; x. 33 with xxix. 7, 8. From this Ewald infers that chaps. x. xi. (chap. xii., he thinks, must have been written by one of those 'redeemed' from the great exile), were composed not long after those chapters. Samaria must at any rate have fallen in the interval. So, at least, thinks Ewald on the ground of x. 9. Delitzsch, however, is of opinion that the prophet is speaking from his 'watch-tower' (xxi. 6), and gives his intuitions the form of history. He knows that Samaria is doomed; he knows how the Assyrian will speak after her fall; he knows that a hostile army will march upon Jerusalem; and in *vv.* 28–32 gives an imaginative representation of the line of the Assyrian march. So far as this last point is concerned, Ewald is at one with Delitzsch. 'It is clear,' he says, 'from the context that Yesaya is here describing a future march as his imagination depicts it; the perfect tense prevails merely to produce greater vividness of description?' Both scholars are also agreed that the invasion referred to was not actually made from the quarter here described by the prophet. I have remarked elsewhere that it is no longer possible to hold with these, and indeed with the majority of the best critics, that Sennacherib is the Assyrian invader referred to, chiefly because the conquest of Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad, Samaria, and Damascus, which is referred to in *v.* 9 as recent, was effected by Sargon, not Sennacherib.[1] Sargon, therefore, ought to be the invader of Judah; we should have a right to postulate this, even without any collateral information from Assyria, if it were only to account for the fragmentary and, as they stand, inconsistent traditions put together in chaps. xxxvi.–xxxix. But such collateral information still exists, as Mr. Sayce was the first to point out, and there is good reason to suppose that it once existed in larger abundance. We know from the cylinder inscription found at Kouyunjik,

[1] Not, be it observed, on account of the perfect tenses in x. 28–31. I do not know why Isaiah should not have foreseen that the hostile approach of the Assyrians would be made by the northern road from Samaria. He speaks from his prophetic 'watch-tower'; comp. on xxi. 7–9. I repudiate the artificial theory of a *vaticinium post eventum*.

and referred to on chap. xx., that Judah was a member of the coalition which included Yavan, king of Ashdod, who was so severely punished by Sargon. Unfortunately this cylinder is broken, so that the history of Sargon's vengeance on Judæa cannot be presented in detail. It is certain, however, that in another inscription Sargon calls himself the conqueror of Judæa, his words are :—*musacnis mat-Yahudu sa asarsu ru'uku*, 'the subduer of the land of Judah whose situation is remote.'[1] Dr. Schrader, too, has since accepted this result as self-evident.

[5] Woe unto Asshur, the rod of mine anger, and [b] a staff is in their hand [b] (?) mine indignation! [6] Against a profane nation [c] am I wont to [c] despatch him, and against the people of my wrath to give him a charge, to take spoil and to seize prey, and to make it a trampling, like the mire of the streets. [7] But as for him, not so doth he plan, and his heart not so doth it reckon, for to destroy is in his heart, and to cut off nations not a few. [8] For he saith, 'Are not my princes altogether kings? [9] Is not Calno as Carchemish? or is not Hamath as Arpad?

[b] The staff which is in their hand is, Ges.—(Text difficult).
[c] Will I, Del.—Did I, Ges.

[5] **The rod of mine anger . . .**] The latter part of the verse seems to be corrupt (see crit. note), but the general sense is clear: Assyria is but the instrument of the Divine purposes. So in Jer. li. 20 (comp. l. 23), Babylon is addressed as God's 'hammer.'

[6] **Am I wont to despatch him**] This rendering implies that the **impious nation** and the **people of my wrath** refer to any and every nation of this description; alt. rends., that either Israel is intended alone, or Israel and Judah together.

[7] **Not so doth he plan**] His whole thought is bent on enlarging his own empire, without regard to the purposes of Jehovah. For Jehovah, according to the Old Testament, punishes even unwitting violations of his rights (comp. 2 Sam. vi. 7).

[8-11] But Sargon makes no distinction between Judah and other countries. He has two good reasons for feeling sure of victory: 1. his very officers are kings—his might is therefore tenfold that of Hezekiah; and 2. he has already captured cities as important as Jerusalem.——**Princes**] As in Jer. xxxviii. 17, xxxix. 3.—Dr. Weir compares this boastful speech with the vaunts of Tiglath-Pileser I. (*Records of the Past*, v. 5–26).

[9] **Is not Calno as Carchemish?**] 'Pass ye over to Calneh, and see, and thence go ye to Great Hamath, and go down to Philistian Gath; are ye better than those kingdoms? or is your border greater than their border?' (Am. vi. 2, so Geiger). The parallel is complete. Comp. also xxxvi. 19, xxxvii. 13. Calno or Calneh = the Assyrian Kullani.——**Carchemish**] It was Mr. George Smith's last fatal journey which revealed the long-lost site of this great Euphratean emporium. Professor Rawlinson and others[2] were right in identifying it with Hierapolis, but wrong in supposing Hierapolis to be Mabug.

[1] Layard's *Inscriptions*, xxxiii. 8, quoted by Sayce, *Theological Review*, 1873, p. 18.
[2] See Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, vol. ii. p. 67; *Journal des Savans*, Oct. 1873; Nöldeke, *Nachrichten* of the Göttingen Gesellschaft, 1876, p. 457, &c.

or is not Samaria as Damascus? [10] As my hand hath found the kingdoms of the not-gods (and their images did exceed those of Samaria and Damascus), [11] can I not, as I have done to Samaria and her not-gods, so do to Jerusalem and her images?'

The site of Mabug is eight or nine miles from the river; that of Hierapolis (now corrupted into Iarabolus), is on its bank. The inscriptions found by Mr. Smith put it beyond all doubt that the latter site is also that of Carchemish. See letter from Mr. John Parsons, in the *Times*, dated Aug. 23 (1876).—Important as Carchemish was as a city of the Hittites (Khatti, Kheta), it attained still greater prosperity under the Assyrians, especially after the overthrow of Tyre by Sennacherib. How important it was, is shown by the frequent references to the mana (= Hebr. maneh), of Gargamis (its Assyrian name), as a standard weight in the commercial cuneiform inscriptions. Its Egyptian name was Karukamasha (Birch).——**Hamath**] Still an important city under the name of Hamah. On the hieroglyphic inscriptions which have been found there, see Burton and Drake's *Unexplored Syria*, and Sayce, *Transactions of Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vol. v. pp. 22–32. —— **Arpad**] Always coupled with Hamath. Its Tell or hill still preserves the name of Erfâd; it is about three (German) miles from Aleppo (*Zeitschr. d. d. morg. Ges.* xxv. 655).

[10] We should have expected Isaiah to continue, 'How then, shall Jerusalem escape'? But two other related thoughts suggest themselves to his mind: First, that Samaria and Jerusalem are in a special manner parallel; and secondly, that Sargon might well represent the idols which, according to him, they worshipped as inferior in number and importance to those of the other nations.——**The kingdoms of the not-gods**] This would certainly be strange in the mouth of Sargon, however appropriate in that of Isaiah. An Assyrian king would not have denied that the gods of other nations had any existence at all; he only regarded it as his mission to reduce them to subjection to the supreme god Asshur. The destruction of weaker states involved, to him, the humiliation of as many rival deities. Sargon carries away captive the gods of the king of Ashdod. Esar-haddon improves upon this. He takes away the gods of the Arabs, inscribes the idols with the praises of Asshur, and then returns them to their original owners.——**Their idols**] Sargon throws in Jehovah together with the 'heaps' (lvii. 13) of adopted deities. He also confounds the worship of Jehovah under a symbol, prevalent in Israel, with the imageless religion maintained by Isaiah and Hezekiah.——**Did exceed**] In Phœnicia, as in Assyria and Babylonia, each canton and even town had its own variety of cult (Baal-Tsōr, Baal-Khatsor, &c.). In Israel and Judah the same localising tendency existed; it was derived from the Canaanites. But the influence of the simpler religion of Jehovah must have checked its progress, even in Israel, but especially in Judah. Yet even in Judah, we find Isaiah complaining that 'their land has become full of not-gods' (ii. 8), and Jeremiah—before the Reformation of Josiah—that 'the gods of Judah are become as many as her cities' (ii. 28; comp. xi. 13). Perhaps the Sargon of Isaiah means that the idols of the other nations were superior, partly in numbers, and partly in importance. A bitter insult, whether it exactly corresponded to fact, or not!—On the word rendered 'images,' see Smith's *Bible Dic* art. 'Idolatry.'

12 And it shall come to pass: when the Lord shall have finished all his work on mount Zion and in Jerusalem, I will hold visitation on the fruit of the arrogance of the king of Assyria and on the vain glory of the haughtiness of his eyes. 13 For he hath said, 'By the strength of my hand have I done it, and by my wisdom, for I am discerning, and I removed the bounds of peoples, and their treasures I plundered, and brought [c] down like a Mighty One those that sat (on thrones) [c]; 14 and my hand reached as a nest the riches of peoples, and as a man gathereth forsaken eggs I have gathered all the earth, and there was none that fluttered a wing, nor opened a beak, nor chirped. 15 Is the axe to vaunt itself against him who heweth with it? or is the saw to brag against him who moveth it to and fro? As if a rod should move him to and fro who lifteth it up, as if a staff should lift up that which is not-wood!

[c] Those who were strongly seated, Heb. margin (?), Vulg., A. E., Lowth (prob. Sept., Pesh.)—(As) a strong one, Heb. marg. (?); like a god (or, like a steer, Del.); the enthroned, Hebr. text, Ew.

12 But the turning-point is coming. As soon as Judah has been chastised sufficiently, Jehovah will throw the 'rod' away, and take notice of these defiant words. ——**Shall have finished**] Lit. cut off (same word in Zech. iv. 9). ——**All his work**] It is the 'work' of Judah's punishment, in which the under-worker is Assyria. See on xxviii. 21. ——**The fruit of the arrogance**] i.e., the acts and words in which this arrogance expresses itself.

13. 14 Another imaginary speech of the Assyrian king. It is a graphic sketch of his victorious march, which he ascribes to his possession of absolute strength and wisdom. ——**Removed the bounds**] So Ramannirari (*c.* 820 B.C.) four times over styles himself 'remover of boundaries and landmarks,' Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries*, pp. 243–4 (Dr. Weir). ——**And I brought down**] viz. from their high thrones (comp. xlvii. 1). ——**Like a Mighty One**] Hebr. *k'abbir*. I have hesitated between the rival renderings (above). For the former, comp. xxxiv. 7, Ps. xxii. 12 (13), l. 13; the bull was a familiar royal emblem in Assyria. For the latter, see Ps. lxxviii. 25, 'bread of Mighty Ones,' i.e., celestial beings; LXX., angels. The latter seems to me now more in accordance with the style of the Assyrian royal inscriptions (see, e.g., *Records of the Past*, v. 17). *Abbir*, *Abhîr*, and *Addir* are all divine epithets in Hebrew (the last-named also in Phœnician), and capable of being used as synonyms for *Elôhîm*. ——**Mine hand hath reached**] Precisely this language is used by Sargon in his Annals (*Records of the Past*, vii. 28). ——**As a nest**] Strictly speaking, the kingdoms are the nests (comp. Hab. ii. 5), the eggs are the treasures. Metaphors from bird-catching occur both in Assyrian and in Egyptian royal inscriptions. ——**None that fluttered a wing**] None that even attempted the feeble resistance of a bird defending its nest.

15 **Him who lifteth it up**] The participle is in the plural, suggesting that Jehovah is referred to. So

[16] Therefore shall the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, despatch against his fat parts Leanness, and under his glory shall burn a burning like the burning of fire; [17] and the Light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and it shall kindle and devour his briars and thorns in one day; [18] and the glory of his forest and of his garden-land, both soul and body, shall it consume, so that it shall be like a sick man's pining away; [19] and the remnant of the trees of his forest shall be few, that a child may write them. [20] And it shall come to pass in that day: the remnant of Israel, and the escaped of the house of Jacob, shall no longer rely upon his smiter, but shall rely upon Jehovah, Israel's Holy One, in faithfulness. [21] A remnant shall return, even the remnant of Jacob to God-Mighty-One. [22] For though thy people, O Israel, were as the

liv. 5 Hebr.——**Hot-wood**] A compound expression, = different from wood (comp. xxxi. 8).

16-19 Assyria's punishment described under the familiar images of pining sickness and fire.——**His fat parts**] i.e., his strong warriors, as Ps. lxxviii. 31. Same figure, xvii. 4.——**A burning**] It is the fire which symbolises the anger of God against sin; comp. xxx. 27, 33, xxxi. 9, xxxiii. 14. See next verse.

[17] **Israel's Light**] Again a phrase of mythic origin used nobly as a symbol (comp. on xxx. 27, xxxi. 9, and especially xxxiii. 14). Notice the accumulation of Divine titles, expressive of the fullness and awfulness of the Divine perfections.——**His briars and his thorns**] Comp. ix. 18. Not the common soldiers, as opposed to the stately forest-trees of the leaders (Lowth, Hitz., Ew.); this is too realistic. The serried battalions of Assyria remind the prophet of a forest, and their destruction of a forest-conflagration. The fire first catches hold of the thorns and briars, and then passes to the crowd of stately trees.——**In one day**] i.e., in one battle (see on ix. 3).

[18] **His garden-land**] Hebr. *karmel*, i.e., land planted with 'noble' trees, vines, olives, &c.——**Both soul and body**] An abrupt change of metaphor (comp. i. 6). 'Body,' lit. flesh. Biblical Hebrew has no word to express our conception of 'body.' The last clause is difficult; see crit. note.

[19] **Few**] Lit., a number. The word is cognate with the verb in the next clause.——**Write**] Children, then, could write; comp. Judg. viii. 14.

20. 21 The remnant of Assyria remains without a promise, at least *for the present* (see on xix. 23). The remnant of Israel, however, is thoroughly weaned from its false confidences, and returns to the true God.——**His smiter**] Assyria.——**In faithfulness**] Or, in steadfastness. See Jer. iv. 1-4.——**God the Mighty One**] God who has manifested himself as the mighty one. They are the words (*El Gibbôr*) which form the second couple in the compound name of the Messiah. Yet we can hardly venture to take them as an appellation of the Messiah, for it is Jehovah who acts alone throughout this part of the prophecy. Even later on, when the Messiah does appear (xi. 1, &c.), it is with more restricted functions than in ix. 6, 7, where he is not merely the source of happiness for the future, but the author of deliverance from misery (see on ix. 6).

[22] **A remnant of it**] A remnant

sand of the sea, (only) a remnant of them shall return: a final work and decisive, overflowing with righteousness! [23] For a [d] final work and a decisive doth the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, execute [d] within all the [e] land.

[24] Therefore thus saith the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, Fear not, O my people that dwellest in Zion, because of Asshur, if he smite thee with the rod, and lift up his staff upon thee in the manner of Egypt. [25] For yet a very little while, and indignation is at an end, and mine anger [f] shall serve for wasting them away (?) [f]. [26] And Jehovah Sabáoth shall brandish over him a scourge, as at the smiting of Midian at the rock of Oreb, and his rod over the sea—he shall lift it up in the manner of Egypt. [27] And it shall come to pass in that day: his burden shall remove from off thy back, and his yoke from off thy neck; yea, the yoke shall be broken by reason of [g] the fat.[g]

[d] So Kay. [e] Earth, Sept., Ew., Naeg., Weir.
[f] Against the world shall cease, Luzzatto (dividing the words in the Hebr., differently).
[g] Oil, Vitr., Kay, Weir.—(Text probably corrupt, Weir.)

certainly, but only a remnant. A phrase of double meaning, such as Isaiah loves (comp. *v.* 24).——**A final work . . .**] Isaiah anticipates the worst for the impenitent. Indeed, the judgment seems to have begun; the Assyrians are already in Judah. This very peculiar phrase recurs in xxviii. 22, Dan. ix. 27; comp. xi. 36. Dr. Weir, strangely enough, sees nothing in it to hinder him from taking *vv.* 21–23 as purely consolatory ('a remnant shall certainly return' . . . 'destruction shall be kept within fixed limits,' for which last he compares Job xiv. 5). Luther reached the same result, but by downright mistranslation. ——**Righteousness**] i.e., righteous judgment, righteous at once in vengeance and in lovingkindness.

[23] **Within all the land**] Not merely 'in its midst;' comp. vi. 12.

[24] The prophet here turns to the believing portion of the people. With these cheering prospects they have no occasion to fear. ——**After the manner of Egypt**] Again a Janus-word. For the oppression of Egypt led to the Exodus (see *v.* 26).

[26] **A scourge**] So xxviii. 15, 18, Job ix. 23; comp. on xxx. 28.—— **As at the smiting of Midian**] (So ix. 3.) Or, as he smote Midian (Naeg.), for all the turning-points in Israel's history are notable signs of the energising of Jehovah. The mention of the rock Oreb as the chief locality is strange (see Judg. vii.), but Isaiah may wish to suggest that the Assyrian army will not only be overthrown, but deprived of its leaders, like the Midianites. There is no sufficient reason for supposing that Isaiah followed a different tradition of the Midianitish defeat (Studer, Wellhausen).—— **His rod over the sea**] 'And he shall pass through the sea Affliction, and shall smite the waves in the sea Billows' (Zech. x. 11). The Red Sea has become typical. Comp. xi. 15, 16.

[27] Two figures:—Israel as a burden-bearer, and as an animal under the yoke. The last clause is very difficult according to the rec. text.

[28] He cometh upon Aiath, passeth through Migron; at Michmash he layeth up his baggage: [29] they go through the pass, in Geba they have taken up their lodging; Ramah trembleth, Gibeah of Saul fleeth. [30] Cry aloud, O daughter of Gallim; attend, Laishah! [h] answer her, Anathoth! [h] [31] Madmenah wandereth; the inhabitants of Gebim save their goods by flight. [32] This very day he will halt in Nob, swinging his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem. [33] Behold, the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, loppeth the crown of boughs with a dreadful crash; and the high of stature are felled, and the lofty are brought low; [34] and one shall cut down the thickets of the forest with iron, and Lebanon shall fall through a Glorious One.

[h] So Pesh., Lowth, Ew., Weir.—Hebr. points, poor Anathoth!

It is surely strange to say that the pressure of the fat of an animal will destroy the yoke. Besides, it is not the yoke of Israel which bursts of itself, but Jehovah who bursts it. I strongly suspect an error in the text.

[28-33] It is this passage which led to the rectification of the date of the prophecy (see Introd.). The details are to be taken literally. They are either Isaiah's prophetic anticipations (realised by the event), or his retrospect, and relate to the latter part of Sargon's march against Jerusalem.——**Aiath**] i.e., Ai. It would seem that the kingdom of Judah extended nearly as far north as Bethel. See Ewald, *History*, iv. 3.

[30] **Anathoth**] The name is important as proving the wide prevalence of cults analogous to those of Babylonia.[1]

[32] **This very day . . .**] He will at once press on to Nob, within view of the city.—The site of Nob is still uncertain. It cannot possibly be the same as Mizpeh and Gibeon, as Lieut. Conder conjectured. Major Wilson 'cannot imagine a more natural site than some place in the vicinity of that Scopus whence, in later years, Titus and his legions looked down upon the Holy City.' See Josephus, *B. J.*, v. 2. 3.——**Swinging his hand**] Threateningly.

[33, 34] The sudden end. A Hand from above lops off the crown of Assyria's foliage, and lays that proud Lebanon low. Comp. *vv.* 17-19, xxxii. 19. A similar faith in xxix. 6.——**A Glorious One**] i.e., Jehovah; see on x. 13, and comp. xxxiii. 21, Ps. xciii. 4 (see Hebr.).

[1] *Anath* is undoubtedly the name of a goddess, the feminine of the god Anu. Other Hebrew names compounded with Anath are Beth-anat, Beth-anoth—no mistake is possible, for Beth-anat (Bet-anta) is transcribed in Egyptian by Thothmes with the determination of Divinity. Comp. also Shamgar, 'the son of Anath.' The male deity, Anu, is only found in the Old Test. in the name Anammelech (Anu-malik), the god of the colonists from Sepharvaim or Sippara, 2 Kings xvii. 31. See De Vogüé, *Mélanges*, pp. 41, 42; Lenormant, *Bérose*, pp. 148–165, and for Anat or Anta in Egypt, De Rougé, *Mélanges d'archéologie*, 1875, p. 269. [E. Meyer denies that the Anat of the Canaanites is to be identified with that of the neighbouring countries (*Zeitschr. d. d. morg. Ges.*, 1877, p. 717). Yet the view is intrinsically reasonable.]

CHAPTER XI.

COMP. *Oracula Sibyll.*, iii. 776–794, a fine paraphrase of this prophecy, which may possibly in its turn have been imitated by Virgil in the famous Fourth Eclogue.

[1] And there shall come forth a shoot from the stock of Jesse, and a twig from his roots shall bear fruit. [2] And there shall rest upon him the spirit of Jehovah, a spirit of wisdom and discernment, a spirit of counsel and might, a spirit of knowledge and of the fear of Jehovah. [3] And [a] he shall draw his breath [a] in the fear of Jehovah, and he shall not judge according to the sight of his eyes, nor arbitrate according to the

[a] So Herder, Ew., Naeg.—He shall find a sweet savour, Ges., Del.

[1] Still the figure of the tree, but employed on a new subject—the Jewish state. Hence a striking contrast between the fate of the cedar-forest of Assyria and the oak of Jesse. The cedar, being a species of pine, throws out no fresh suckers (see Kay *ad loc.*); an interesting anecdote in Herodotus (vi. 37) is based on this fact, which also explains the dwindled numbers of the cedars of Lebanon. But the oak is a tree 'in which, at the felling, a stock is left' (vi. 13); or, as Job says, 'from the smell of water it will sprout and bring forth boughs like a [fresh] plant' (xiv. 9). There is a future then for the country represented by the oak. As David sprang from the humble family of Jesse, so the Messiah, the second David, shall arise out of great humiliation.—This prophecy supplements the vague predictions in vii. 14–16, ix. 6, 7. It tells us (comp. Mic. v. 2) that the Messiah was to belong to the family of David; this is all which Isaiah appears to have known. The house of David was large; there was even 'a sort of secondary royal family'—the house of Nathan (Zech. xii. 12). 'Isaiah might well be uncertain which of the numerous princes who were descended from David was the one chosen by God to be the national regenerator.'[1] There is nothing to indicate that he thought of Hezekiah, or of any of the children of Hezekiah.

[2] Deserting the figure, the prophet proceeds to describe the character, gifts, and public conduct of the Messiah. He is to be David and Solomon in one,[2] equally great in knowledge and in practice. His qualities are arranged in three pairs, but all spring from one source, 'the Spirit of Jehovah,' which 'rests (permanently) upon him' (comp. xlii. 1). They are (1) moral and intellectual clearness of perception, (2) the wisdom and bravery which befit a ruler (comp. xxxvi. 5), (3) a knowledge of the requirements of Jehovah (see Mic. vi. 8), and the will to act agreeably to this knowledge.

[3] He has not merely received the Spirit (lit. breath) from without, but so assimilated it, that 'the fear of Jehovah' has become as it were the breath of his nostrils, his vital element. (Against alt. rend. see Naeg.). But 'the fear of Jehovah' is nothing if not practical, and the Messiah's royal calling requires him in the first instance to be a judge (comp. Jer. xxi. 12). Hence the prophet continues, **He shall not judge** . . .] i.e., the Messiah will not be the sport of appearances, like ordinary kings, nor even re-

[1] See *I. C. A.*, p. 88; comp. p. 239.

[2] Hooykaas.

hearing of his ears, [4] but with righteousness shall he judge the helpless, and arbitrate with equity for the humble in the land, and he shall smite the [b] tyrant with the sceptre of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips shall he slay the ungodly. [5] And righteousness shall be the girdle of his loins, and faithfulness the girdle of his reins. [6] And the wolf shall lodge with the lamb, and the leopard lie down with the kid, and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and there shall be a little child leading them. [7] And the cow and the bear shall graze, together shall their young ones lie down,

[b] So Lagarde.—Text, earth (or, land).

quire a lengthened investigation. Having 'the spirit of knowledge' from on high, he will 'know what is in man.'

[4] In striking contrast to the corrupt princes of Judah (i. 23, x. 2) **he** will make the poor, especially the 'poor in spirit,' his chief care. But **the tyrant**, him whom all men dread for his tyrannical behaviour; or, as the next line explains it, 'the ungodly one' **he shall smite**, &c. This is exactly parallel to what Isaiah says of the Messianic period (though the King is not there mentioned) in xxix. 19, 20 'And the humble shall increase their joy in Jehovah . . . because the terrible one has come to nought.' The received reading gives the passage a different and rather less appropriate term. The 'earth' must be the hostile, heathen world, and the 'ungodly' a collective term for its rulers (comp. Ps. cxxv. 3 'the sceptre of ungodliness'), and the prophet will then allude to the judicial act of vengeance which, down to the time of John the Baptist, was regarded as chronologically the first function of the Messiah.——**With the sceptre of his mouth**] The whole phrase is remarkable. It brings the King very near divinity, for the creative virtue of the word belongs properly to Jehovah: 'I have slain them,' says Jehovah, 'by the words of my mouth' (Hos. vi. 5). It is also ascribed to the Messiah in Zech. ix. 10, 'He shall *speak* peace to the nations,' and to the Servant of Jehovah in xlix. 2 (see note). The bearings of this point on the questions as to the nature of the Messiah and of the Servant will be at once evident. There is a tempting appearance of a parallel in Zoroastianism; but it is a mirage!—the 'word' or 'words' in *Vendidad* xix. 28–34, are too certainly liturgical symbols. Obs. the Messiah is monarch of the world, though as Sir E. Strachey truly observes, the idea of the universal kingdom is not so prominent here as in many other places.

[5] He shall be always ready for acts of **righteousness** (i.e., justice) and **faithfulness** (i.e., trustworthiness). Does not this passage determine the sense of ἀλήθεια in Eph. vi. 14? The tautology in the repeated **girdle** displeases Bishop Lowth and Dr. de Lagarde, but Hebrew ears did not mind it; comp. xv. 8, xvi. 7, xvii. 12, 13, li. 8 (Kocher, against Lowth, in 1786).

[6-9] The rest of creation shall sympathise with this reign of virtue and piety. Evil having been eradicated from the nature of man, it would be incongruous that cruelty and rapine should prevail among the lower animals. It is stated as the cause of the Deluge that 'all flesh (i.e., both man and beast) had corrupted its way upon the earth' (Gen. vi. 12). If the sight of the violence and cruelty of man was

and the lion shall eat straw like the ox; [8] and the suckling shall play by the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall stretch out his hand on the [c] den of the basilisk. [9] They shall not [d] harm nor destroy in all my holy mountain, for the earth will have become full of the knowledge of Jehovah, as the waters which cover the sea.

[10] And it shall come to pass in that day: the root of Jesse which standeth for a signal to the peoples—unto him shall the nations resort, and his resting-place shall be glory. [11] And

[c] So Pesh., Vulg., Bochart, Ges., Naeg.—Eyeball, Targ., Ew., Del.
[d] Do evil, Vitr., Ew., Kay.

effectual for the corruption of the original innocence of the beasts and birds, surely the sight of their peace and harmony would be equally potent in its restoration. It is singular that nothing is said here of the products of the earth, which generally furnish such striking features to descriptions like the present. Verses 6, 7, and 9 are repeated in a condensed form in lxv. 25.—Most of the ancients and Calvin take the description allegorically; the Jewish realistically; Hengst. admits a secondary allegorical sense; Naeg., while adhering (and rightly) to the realistic interpretation, takes the details to be simply typical or symbolical of a real elevation of the natural world; Ew. is vague.

[8] **Basilisk**] So Aquila and Jerome (*βασιλισκος, Serpens regulus*). At any rate, some venomous serpent is intended (comp. lix. 5).

[9] **They shall not harm . . .**] Most of those who adopt alt. rend. assume that the allegorical sense of *vv.* 6–8 is at least the primary one, and make the verbs in *v.* 9 *a* refer to the citizens of the Messianic kingdom. They seem to doubt whether wild beasts can be called 'evil,' forgetting Gen. xxxvii. 20. Not only, however, is it more natural to continue the realistic interpretation; but we are almost bound to do so by lxv. 25 (see note). The prophet argues (as suggested above) from the improved condition of the human world that the evil propensities of the lower animals will die out.——**In all my holy mountain**] i.e., on the slopes of mount Zion, which will have been wonderfully transformed in accordance with the prophecy in ii. 2, comp. Zech. xiv. 10, Ezek. xl. 2 (Naeg.). Or, in the whole highland-country of Israel, comp. lvii. 13, Ps. lxxviii. 54, Ex. xv. 17 (Hupfeld, Del.). The first view is the safer; it is by no means certain that 'mountain' in the passages mentioned means the Holy Land.—The next clause shows that the harmlessness of the animals on the holy mountain is only a symbol of 'paradise regained' throughout the world.——**The earth . . .**] Such, and not 'the land,' must be the rendering, unless we are prepared to limit 'the sea' to the waters washing the coast of Palestine! In the next verse, too, we have 'peoples' and 'nations.'

[10 16] But the 'restitution of all things' requires some further development on the side of humanity. Hence the details in the following verses. The mention of the earth as a whole in *v.* 9 suggests to the prophet to begin with the Gentiles. —— **The root**] i.e., the plant springing from the root, as liii. 2, Deut. xxix. 17, Sirach xlvii. 25 (22). There is a special reason for the phrase here; it emphasises the contrast between the outwardly mean origin and the ultimate greatness of the Messiah. For how tall must the plant have grown, to serve as 'a signal to the nations.'—The passage is alluded to in Rev. v. 5,

it shall come to pass in that day: the Lord shall stretch out his hand a second time to purchase the remnant of his people which shall be left from Assyria and from Egypt, and from Pathros and from Cush, and from Elam and from Shinar, and from Hamath and from the • countries of the sea. [12] And he shall lift up a signal for the nations, and shall gather the outcast of Israel, and collect the dispersed of Judah from the four

• See on xl. 15.

xxii. 16.——**Resort**] Word specially used of prayer (lv. 6) and of consultation of oracles (viii. 19, xix. 3).——**His resting-place**] The word is significant. The throne of the Messiah is 'for ever and ever' (ix. 6), like that of Elohim (Ps. xlv. 67).——**Shall be glory**] viz. the glory of Jehovah, for when Jehovah Sabáoth (whose representative is the Messiah) 'becomes king in mount Zion, there shall be glory before his elders' (xxiv. 23). Comp. iv. 5.

[11] Out of chronological order (*pace* Naegelsbach) the prophet now describes the restoration of the Israelites.——**The Lord shall stretch out his hand a second time**] The 'first time' was clearly at the Mosaic Exodus (x. 24, 26).——**To purchase**] Illustrate by Ex. xv. 16, (xix. 5,) Ps. lxxiv. 2, Isa. l. i., lii. 3.——**From Assyria . . .**] First the prophet mentions the two greatest of Israel's foes, Assyria and Egypt, or rather Lower Egypt, (Ebers), then Pathros, or Southland (Brugsch), i.e. Upper Egypt, and Cush, i.e. Ethiopia, then Elam (xxii. 6) and Shinar (i.e., the country enclosed by the Euphrates and the Tigris from the points where these rivers approach = Irak-Arabi), then the neighbouring Hamath (see below), and lastly the more distant shores of the Mediterranean Sea. Comp. parallel passage, xxvii. 13. The extent ascribed to the dispersion is certainly surprising. Does Isaiah, we must ask, describe a present or a future state of things? No doubt the calamities of war (especially the fall of the northern kingdom) had brought many Israelites into foreign slavery, and this may be alluded to in Zech. ix. 11–13 (Joel iii. 6 is, I believe, much later). But this affords a very inadequate explanation. Nothing short of a succession of severe judgments, issuing in the almost complete destruction of the Jews as a people, will fully account for the emphatic language of Isaiah. 'Jehovah stretches out his hand a second time':—there must therefore be a correspondence between the first and the second deliverance. The whole people was in Egypt; it must be presumed that the whole people, or so much as will be left from the sword, will be languishing in exile when Jehovah shall again interpose. This implies that a succession of sore judgments will have passed over the land of Israel, as the result of which not even 'a tenth part' will be left, and 'great will be the desolate space within the land' (vi. 12). Isaiah, like the prophets in general, idealises the actual circumstances, and 'sees the entire evolution of the kingdom of God compressed into the immediate future' (Drechsler).——**From Elam**] Jews from Elam (lit. 'sons of Elam') appear in the list of returned exiles in Ezra ii. 7.——**From Hamath**] Mentioned here because the kingdom of David and of Jeroboam II. extended thus far. Hamath, too, is really quite as far from Jerusalem as Cairo (about ten days' journey, says Mukaddasî). Nöldeke (*Zeitschr. d. d. m. G.* 1878).

[12] The raising of the signal is mentioned again to associate the Israelites with the Gentiles. Hence the true religion will be open to all nations.——**The outcast** (men) . . .

wings of the earth ; [13] and the jealousy of Ephraim shall depart, and the [f] adversaries of Judah shall be cut off : Ephraim shall not be jealous of Judah, and Judah shall not be an adversary to Ephraim. [14] And they shall pounce upon the shoulder of Philistia towards the west ; together shall they spoil the sons of the east ; on Edom and Moab shall they put forth their hand, and the sons of Ammon shall obey them. [15] And Jehovah shall [g] lay under a ban [g] the tongue of the Egyptian sea, and shall swing his hand over the River with his [h] violent blast, and strike it into seven channels, and make men go over dry-shod ; [16] and a highway shall be made for the remnant of his people, as there was made for Israel in the day of his coming up out of the land of Egypt.

[f] Hostile ones, Ges.
[g] Dry up, Sept., Pesh., Targ., Vulg. (another reading).
[h] So Luzzatto (see crit. note).—Glowing, Ew., Del., Naeg.

the dispersed (women)] A short way of expressing that both sexes will be included.

[13] The inner union of the tribes shall correspond to the outer. The great feud which runs through all Israel's history (comp. ix. 21) between north and south shall come to an end ; those who seek to revive it, God shall 'cut off.'——**The jealousy of Ephraim**] i.e., the jealousy felt towards Ephraim in contrast to 'the adversaries of Judah,' i.e., the Ephraimites. This seems to me now a grammatically easier and therefore more probable explanation than its converse—'jealousy felt by Ephraim' and 'the unquiet ones in Judah.' Obs. the skilful variation in the latter part of the verse. Ephraim, who was the object of jealousy before, now becomes its subject ; while Judah, at first the sufferer from Ephraim's hostility, now becomes the foremost in the feud. So Naeg., whose note throws great light upon the passage.

[14] Another picture of the Messianic age is here presented to us, expressing the wishes of a less advanced stage of morality. Some of the tribes had suffered greatly from their restless and warlike neighbours, whom, owing to the incomplete national union, they had not been to repel. Now, however, Israel can take his revenge. United as one man—or rather, as one bird of prey (Hab. i. 8)—he shall **pounce on the shoulder of Philistia** (a coast district, sloping down to the sea like a shoulder, comp. Num. xxxiv. 11), on **the sons of the east**, i.e., the Arabian and Aramaic tribes, E. and N. E. of Palestine, and lastly on the Edomites, the Moabites, and the Ammonites (comp. Zeph. ii. 4–10).

[15] A miraculous passage shall be made for the exiles in Egypt and Assyria.——**The tongue, &c.**] i.e., the gulf of Akaba, 'or its former northerly extension' (Major Palmer). 'Tongue,' used as in Josh. xv. 2, 5, xviii. 19. 'The Egyptian sea,' i.e., the Red Sea.——**Swing . . .**] See on x. 32.——**The River**] i.e., the Euphrates ; comp. xliv. 27.

CHAPTER XII.

[1] And thou shalt say in that day, 'I will thank thee, Jehovah! for thou wast wrath with me: thy wrath turned back, and thou comfortedst me. [2] Behold, the God of my salvation! I will trust and not be afraid, for my strength and my song is Jah [a Jehovah]; and he became unto me salvation.'

[3] And ye shall draw water with joy out of the wells of salvation. [4] And ye shall say in that day, 'Give thanks to Jehovah, celebrate his name, make known his deeds among the peoples, make mention that his name is exalted. [5] Play music unto Jehovah, for he hath done surpassingly; let this be known in all the earth. [6] Give a shrill and ringing cry, O inhabitress of Zion, for great within thee is the Holy One of Israel.'

[a] Omitted in some MSS., and some editions of Targ.—Sept., Pesh., Vulg. give only one name of God.

[1] The song of the reunited and restored people, with whom the prophet unites himself in spirit. It is the counterpart of the Song of Moses in Ex. xv.; indeed, *v.* 2 *b* is adopted from Ex. xv. 2 (see crit. note), and *v.* 5 *a* alludes to the beginning of the song, Ex. xv. 1.

[2] **Salvation**] The Hebr. *y'shū'āh* is a pregnant word. Properly it has the negative meaning 'deliverance.' But in Isaiah (especially II. Isaiah), and in Job (comp. xxx. 15), there are passages in which it seems to have acquired the positive signification 'a state of happiness,' just as the Assyrian for 'life' (*balat*) is properly an 'escaping' from the womb, comp. Job xxi. 10, Hebr. The positive signification, too, is various—sometimes purely temporal blessings, sometimes mixedly temporal and spiritual (comp. σωτήρ in 1 Tim. iv. 10).

CHAPTER XIII.–XIV. 23.

THIS is the first of a series of twelve prophecies (chaps. xiii.–xxiii.) mostly directed against foreign nations. It announces the fall of Babylon, not as an isolated fact in its relations to the Jews only, but as the central event of the 'day of Jehovah.' Its tone is in harmony with the title, extremely rare in the prophetic writings, which it gives to the Divine Judge (El Shaddai, see on *v.* 6):—the softer element, so conspicuous in chaps. xl.–lxvi. is entirely wanting. This remark applies both to the preliminary prophecy in chap. xiii., and to the triumphal Ode on the king of Babylon in chap. xiv. The poetical merits of the latter are, however, so far superior to those of the former, that I have been led to the conjecture (which I hope to defend elsewhere) that the Ode was not originally composed to occupy its present position. However this

may be, it is not only a splendid enforcement of the Biblical doctrine of retribution, but supplies most valuable illustrations of the current beliefs —partly of the Jews, partly also of the Babylonians—as to the other world. (With regard to the form of the Ode, see on xiv. 4.)

Sir E. Strachey has attempted to show that the 'king of Babylon' referred to in the Ode is a king of Assyria (*Jewish History and Politics*, pp. 166–170). It is true that Sargon is called 'king of Babylon' by the Babylonians, and that he styles himself 'king of Assyria and viceroy of Babylon,' but this does not render it probable that 'king of Babylon' in the mouth of Isaiah can mean 'king of Assyria.' The Ode is, in fact, precisely parallel to the song in chap. xlvii., where no one has attempted to make Babylon equivalent to Assyria.

[1] [Utterance of Babylon which Isaiah son of Amoz saw]. [2] Upon a bare mountain lift ye up a signal, raise the voice unto them, swing the hand, that they may enter the gates of the princes. [3] I, even I, have charged my consecrated ones, I have also called my mighty men to execute mine anger, my

[1] The title is by many critics ascribed to a later editor, on the grounds 1. that *massā* 'utterance,' *effatum*, only occurs in Isaiah in chaps. xiii.–xxiii., and that in xvii. 1, xxi. 11, xxii. 1, it is difficult to believe that Isaiah would not have prefixed more suitable titles; and 2. that the Isaianic authorship is opposed by internal evidence. It does not fall within my scope to discuss the latter point here.——**Utterance**] Not 'burden;' 1. because the word is prefixed to at least four passages which are not of a threatening purport (Zech. ix. 1, xii. 1, Prov. xxx. 1, xxxi. 1; comp. Lam. ii. 14); 2. because the rebuke in Jer. xxiii. 33, &c. only yields a good sense if we admit that the prophets were accustomed to apply the word *massā* to their prophecies in the sense of oracle or utterance (comp. Hupfeld on Ps. xv. 3).—Ewald divides chap. xiii. into three stanzas or strophes:—I. *vv.* 2–8; II. *vv.* 9–16; III. *vv.* 17–22. This is plausible, but seems to obscure the connection. The subject suggests a single division at *v.* 14 (see note).

[2-13] The Divine judgment upon the world.——**Upon a bare mountain**] 'Bare,' i.e., treeless, that the signal may be clearly seen. So Balaam 'went to a bare hill,' to survey the tribes of Israel (Num. xxiii. 3). Obs., the hills of Palestine were not so bare anciently as they are now; hence the writer's particularity.——**Lift ye up . . .**] A mysterious voice is heard (as in xl. 3–6, lxii. 10), appointing a signal for a distant army (see v. 26). The summons being urgent, it is to be enforced by a ringing cry (as the army draws nearer), and by a 'swinging (or beckoning) of the hand' (see for the phrase, x. 32; and comp. xlix. 22). —— **The princes**] i.e., the long-established dynasties, which the barbarian *parvenus* are to overthrow.

[3] Jehovah's explanation. The warriors are called **my consecrated ones**, because they are the instruments of Jehovah's will; they are unconscious crusaders. So the army of the Messianic king is clothed 'in holy adornment' (Ps. cx. 3; comp. also in *Q. P. B.*, Jer. xxii. 7, Zeph. i. 7, and Jer. li. 27, 28 (based on our passage).—— **My proudly triumphant ones**] Alluding, says Hitz., to the vain-glorious character of the Persians, comp. Herod. i. 89. But this is unnecessary; the phrase describes the exuberant spirits of the warrior, and

proudly triumphant ones. [4] Hark, a tumult in the mountains, like as of much people! hark, the uproar of the kingdoms of nations gathered together! Jehovah Sabáoth is mustering the host of war. [5] They come from a far country, from the end of the heavens, even Jehovah and the weapons of his indignation, to waste the whole earth. [6] Howl ye, for the day of Jehovah is near; as a destruction from him who is power-

refers not exclusively to the Persians, but to all the barbarian peoples. It recurs in Zeph. iii. 11 in a bad sense, of the haughty sinners of Zion. Which of the two passages is the original, is a complicated question, not to be settled in a few words.

[4] How vividly in three lines the gradual approach of the invading army is described! (Ges.)——**In the mountains**] No doubt, there is a range of mountains (Zagros) in the N. E. of Babylonia, but is it likely that the prophet is thinking of his geography? Are not the mountains rather the ideal barriers which have hitherto kept the barbarian peoples at a distance from civilisation? Nor is it merely the Babylonian empire, but the whole world which is to be laid waste. We can only understand this prophecy in connection with the other eschatological sections (see on iii. 13; and on ch. xxiv.).

[5] **From the end of the heavens**] Heaven being conceived as an immense dome resting on the earth. So Ps. xix. 7, Deut. iv. 32 (twice), xxx. 4 (= Neh. i. 9).

[6] **The day of Jehovah** is that crisis in the history of the world when Jehovah will interpose to rectify the evils of the present, bringing joy and glory to the humble believer, and misery and shame to the proud and disobedient. In a prophecy which is either very early or very late, but in either case historically valuable, it is tersely said (Joel ii. 32), 'Whosoever shall call upon the name of Jehovah shall be saved':—thus there is hope even for the Gentiles. This great crisis is called 'a day,' in antithesis to the ages of the Divine long-suffering:—it is *Jehovah's* day, because without a special Divine interposition, there would be no issue out of the perplexities and miseries of human life. (See H. Schultz, *Alttestamentliche Theologie*, ii. 203, &c.) Comp. Zeph. i. 7, 'the day of Jehovah is at hand.'——**As a destruction . . .**] i.e., with all the characteristics (such as suddenness and completeness, Jer. iv. 20, Weir), of a direct intervention of the Lord of Nature. The Hebr. is *k'shōd mish-shaddai*, an assonance difficult to reproduce tersely. The name here given to God is rarely found in the prophets. Whenever it does occur (Joel i. 15, Ezek. i. 24, x. 5), it appears to express the more severe and awful side of the Divine nature. A similar impression is produced by its use in Ruth i. 20, Ps. lxviii. 14 (15); and though in the Book of Job (23 times), in the Pentateuch (8 times, excluding compound proper names), and in Ps. xci. 1, it seems to be used as a mere synonym for El or Elohim, I cannot but think that force, and specially repellent or destructive force, is the original meaning of the word—a meaning suitable enough to the earliest stage of Biblical religion (see Ex. vi. 3). The rendering of Sept. (generally), Vulg. (in Pent.), and A. V., 'Almighty,' is not a bad general equivalent, even if the first syllable may be ultimately derived from a false etymology (as Geiger, I think, has pointed out), for it admits equally of being interpreted of a favourable and of an adverse Divine interposition. It cannot, however, be accepted as the etymo-

ful to destroy shall it come. [7] Therefore shall all hands be slack, and every human heart shall melt: [8] and they shall be dismayed, taking hold of pangs and throes; as a travailing woman shall they writhe, they shall look aghast each one at the other, faces of flames their faces. [9] Behold, the day of Jehovah cometh, a cruel one, with fury and burning anger, to make the earth a desolation, and to exterminate the sinners thereof out of it. [10] For the stars of heaven, and the Orions thereof, shall not give out their light; the sun shall be dark at his going forth, and the moon shall not cause her light to shine. [11] And I will punish the world for its evil, and the wicked for their iniquity; and I will cause the pride of the arrogant to cease, and the haughtiness of the terrible will I abase. [12] I will make men scarcer than fine gold, and people than the solid gold of Ophir. [13] Therefore will I make the heavens

logical meaning; 'the Mighty God' is not El Shaddai, but El Gibbōr. Gesenius, in his *Thesaurus*, mentions the hypothesis that Shaddai meant originally (i.e., before it was adopted into Biblical religion) God the sender of storms, comp. Aram. *sh'dā*, 1. *jecit*, 2. *effudit*; this has been recently proposed again by Prof. Robertson. Smith (*Academy*, xi. 229), and certainly seems in harmony with the generally physical origin of religious terms: the usual derivation from *shādad* 'he dealt violently' (or, destroyed) is favoured by the present passage, but is not on that account necessarily correct. The Phœnician Σάδιδος (perhaps = Arab. *shadīd*, violent), depends on a fragment of Philo of Byblus (*Fragmenta Hist. Gr.*, ed. Müller, iii. 568); and may be a mere epithet. Ewald, in his latest book (*Glaubenslehre*, 334), expresses himself as very uncertain about the origin of the word.——**Faces of flames their faces**] The phrase is difficult. Most have attempted to make it out to be equivalent to the parallel clause, but without success, for a paralyzing terror rather produces paleness (Jer. xxx. 6). But is this necessary? May we not suppose a transition from horror-struck alarm to 'excitement flashing up amidst their terror, as when flames rise out of thick volumes of smoke' (Kay)? Joel ii. 6 sometimes quoted is not in point; see *Q. P. B.*

[10] **For the stars**] 'Light is sown for the righteous' (Ps. xcvii. 11); consequently, the punishment of the wicked takes place in darkness. Comp. Joel ii. 10.——**The Orions thereof**] i.e., Orion, and the constellations equal to it in brightness. 'Orion' is in Hebr. *k'sīl*, 'the foolish one' (= foolhardy, or perhaps impious), a name for the giant who strove in vain with Jehovah, as Hebrew folklore told (comp. Job xxxviii. 31). Here, however, the original mythic element is almost effaced; the name has become applied to constellations in general. (Comp. Steinthal, *Zeitschrift f. Völkerpsychologie*, ii. 161.)

[11] **The world**] 'That is, the Babylonish empire; as ἡ οἰκουμένη for the Roman empire, or for Judea, Luke ii. 1, Acts xi. 28' (Lowth). But the analogy of prophecy compels us to interpret the words more strictly. See on *v.* 4.

[12] **I will make men . . .**] So in a fuller account of the judgment, 'few men shall be left' (xxiv. 6).

[13] Amidst convulsive throes, the

to tremble, and the earth shall move quaking from its place, for the fury of Jehovah Sabáoth, and for the day of his burning anger. [14] And it shall be as with a gazelle which is chased, as like sheep with none to gather them; they shall turn every one to his own people, and flee every one to his own land; [15] every one who is found shall be thrust through, and every one who [a] is caught [a] shall fall by the sword; [16] and their sucklings shall be dashed in pieces before their eyes; spoiled shall their houses be, and their wives ravished. [17] Behold, I stir up the Medes against them, who regard not silver and take no

[a] So substantially, Ew., Del., Naeg.—Withdraweth himself, Ges. (Comm.), Weir.

present world comes to an end. See on xxiv. 19, 20.——**Therefore**] Clearly this is in no immediate connection with the preceding statement that few men shall survive the judgment. Rather it introduces an intensified description of the terror of Jehovah's Day, and is explained by the latter half of the verse. Because Jehovah's anger is so hot, therefore he will sweep away the scene of man's rebellion. The corresponding image of a new heaven and earth does not appear in this prophecy. ——**The earth shall move quaking** . . .] A clear allusion to Job ix. 6, where the phrase is so to speak at home, arising more naturally than here out of the context.

[14 22] The first act in the world-judgment—the overthrow of Babylon. The prophet does not indeed mention Babylon at once. But a flash of light at the end of *v.* 19 clears up the details of the scene. The place before us is a gathering-point for strangers from all countries, and what should this be but Babylon, with its wide commercial relations and its πάμμικτος ὄχλος (*Persæ*, 53), comp. xlvii. 15, Jer. l. 16, li. 9, 44)?

[15] **Found**, in the city; **caught**, in battle or in flight.

[17] The first to be mentioned by name are the invaders. They are **the Medes**, or, as the Hebr. runs, *Madai*, 'a collective designation for the Aryan [or rather mixed?] populations of Iran, taken from the predominant tribe' (Del.). No inference can be drawn as to the date of chap. xiii., either (*a*) from the mention of the Medes or (*b*) from the non-mention of the Persians (Cyrus, the actual conqueror of Babylon, being a Persian). (*a*) From Raman-nirari III. onwards we hear of Assyrian conquests in Media, and in 2 Kings xvii. 6, xviii. 11, we are told that a part of the captive Israelites had a dwelling-place assigned them 'in the cities of the Medes.' In spite, therefore, of the fact, that the Medes are only mentioned in Isaiah here and in xxi. 2 (both passages in prophecies of disputed authorship), and not again till the Persian period (Ezra vi. 2, Dan. v. 28, &c., Esth. i. 3), I conclude with Dr. Weir that Isaiah might very well have referred by name to the Medes. Then (*b*) as to the non-mention of the name of Persia. As Bochart and Vitr. long ago remarked, this name was not known (or not generally known) in the time of Isaiah, while even in the period of the Persian empire we find Herodotus and Thucydides calling the Persians Medes. But, it may be asked, does not the name Persia occur in Ezekiel (xxvii. 10, xxxviii. 5), and does not this exclude the Captivity-origin of Isaiah xiii.? Not necessarily, any more than the occurrence of 'Medes' for 'Persians' in Herodotus disproves the contemporary

pleasure in gold. [18] And bows shall dash in pieces the youths, and on the fruit of the womb they shall have no compassion; their eye shall not be sorry for children. [19] And Babylon, the splendour of kingdoms, the proud ornament of Chaldea, shall be as at God's overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah. [20] It shall be uninhabited for ever, and be unpeopled for successive generations; and the Arab shall not pitch tent there, and shepherds shall not cause to lie down there. [21] But wild cats shall lie down there, and shriekers shall fill their houses; and ostriches shall dwell there, and [b] satyrs shall dance there; [22] and wailers shall cry in the castles

[b] Wild goats, Saadya (d. 942), Alexander, Henderson.

origin of a work in which the word 'Persians' occurs. Besides, as I have remarked elsewhere (*I. C. A.*, p. 137), the name Persia occurs in Ezekiel 'in company with other names which were certainly unfamiliar to the great majority of Hebrews.' The date of Isa. xiii. must, therefore, be decided upon other grounds.——**Who regard not silver**] Either because it is a war for vengeance, not for booty (Del.), or because gold and silver money was confined to the Semitic world, i.e., to Phœnicia and the regions with which it was in relation.

[19] **As at God's overthrow . . .**] Evidently the phrase has become proverbial. See especially Deut. xxix. 23, and see on i. 9.

[21] **Wild cats . . . satyrs**] Comp. xxxiv. 14, 15. The first clause is antithetical to the last of *v.* 20. A worse fate is reserved for Babylon than for less guilty cities (comp. v. 17):—not flocks of sheep, but 'jackals shall lie down there.' Then, as for 'their palaces, where luxury late reigned' (see context in *Par. Lost*, xi. 750), the only inhabitants shall be demons and demon-like animals. It is worthy of remark, that there is no mention of demons or evil spirits, except in prophecies upon regions utterly excluded from the kingdom of Jehovah, such as Babylon and Edom (chaps. xiii., xxxiv.), prophecies, too, which are denied by many, if not most, critics to Isaiah.—Did the writer or writers of these prophecies themselves believe in the existence of the demons? They may have done so, or they may have used them as poetical decorations; but in either case, they entirely subordinated them to the One God, Jehovah. None of the great prophets could have written the words which Mr. Budge has rendered thus from an Inscription (14) in vol. iv. of *Brit. Mus. Coll.*, 'An incantation to the desert places holy may it go forth!' It is probable enough, however, that the belief in the demons of the desert at any rate increased among the Jews during the Exile, owing to its prevalence in Babylonia and Assyria—see Lenormant, *La Magie*, p. 29, and comp. Levy, *Z. d. m. G.*, ix. 461–491. There is a striking Assyrian parallel to the present passage in the *Annals of Assurbanipal* (Cyl. A, col. 7, l. 7, 8, Smith and Lenormant). As a feature of the devastation of Elam, the king relates, 'Wild asses, serpents, beasts of the desert, and *galhus*, safely I caused to lie down in them.' (*Galhu* means a demon shaped like a bull.) This passage is remarkable for its occurrence in a historical inscription. As for the Babylonian documents on magic, they simply abound in references to the demons of the desert who lie in wait for human prey.——**Satyrs**] i.e., demons or goblins shaped like goats, which,

thereof, and jackals in the palaces of luxury: near coming is its season, and its days shall not be prolonged.

CHAPTER XIV.

[1] For Jehovah will have compassion upon Jacob, and will yet again choose Israel, and settle them on their own ground; and the foreigner shall join himself to them, and they shall attach themselves to the house of Jacob; [2] and peoples shall take them and bring them to their place, and the house of Israel shall take them in possession on Jehovah's ground for bondmen and for bondmaids: and they shall become the captors of their captors, and shall subdue their tyrants.

[3] And it shall come to pass, in the day that Jehovah

we know from Lev. xvii. 7, 2 Chron. xi. 15, were sacrificed to by some of the Israelites. The combination is, no doubt, an odd one to Western readers, 'wolves (?), ostriches, demons, jackals.' But there is a similar one in the passage quoted from Assurbanipal, and we shall meet with another in xxxiv. 14.—Coverdale's 'apes,' Kay's 'baboons,' are against usage. Alt. rend. is, however, quite admissible; see in support of it Alexander's note, and De Goeje, *De Gids*, 1865, pp. 546–7. Several interesting questions are connected with the Hebr. word (*se'irim*); see Gesenius's *Commentary* or *Thesaurus*, and Baudissin, *Studien*, i. 136–9. Our passage is imitated in Jer. l. 39; comp. also ch. xxxiv. 14, 15.

[1-23] The general reason of the judgment on the world is the world's accumulated sin. The special reason of that upon Babylon is the servitude in which it has held Israel.

[1] **Will yet again choose**] The Captivity seemed to imply a resignation on Jehovah's part of his rights over Israel. Comp. Hos. ix. 3, 'They shall not dwell in Jehovah's land,' and lxiii. 19.——**The foreigner**] Lit. the sojourner (comp. Ex. xx. 10, 'thy sojourner).' A characteristic idea of II. Isaiah; see, e.g., xliv. 5, lv. 5, lvi. 3 (see note); as also is that of the friendly escort given by the Gentiles, xlix. 22, lx. 9. In later Hebrew 'sojourner' = proselyte.

[2] **For bondmen and for bondmaids**] This is no doubt partly intended as a righteous retribution —hence the allusion to 'their tyrants.' But in the case of some of the Gentiles, we are meant to suppose that fear will have passed into love, and that they will press for admission into the community of Israel in even the lowest capacity. This is clearly a part of the prophet's meaning (*if the song was originally written for its present place*), for he has just spoken of a voluntary adhesion on the part of 'the sojourners.' Comp. also xlv. 14; but contrast lvi. 6, 7, where the 'foreigners' are allowed to 'join themselves unto Jehovah' on equal terms with born Jews.——**Shall subdue . . .**] Thus the promise in Deut. xv. 6 shall be ultimately fulfilled.

[3] **The hard service**] See on xlvii. 6.——**This taunt-song**] Hebr. *mā-*

giveth thee rest from thy travail and from thy disquiet, and from the hard service which men laid upon thee, that thou shalt take up this taunt-song upon the king of Babylon, and shalt say :—[4] How is the tyrant stilled—the [a] raging stilled! [5] Jehovah hath broken the staff of the wicked, the rod of the rulers, [6] which smote peoples in passion with an unceasing stroke, which trampled down nations in anger with a [b] trampling unrestrained! [7] Quiet and at rest is all the earth; they burst out into a ringing sound. [8] The fir-trees also rejoice at thee, the cedars of Lebanon, 'Since thou liest low, the feller cometh not up against us.'

[9] Sheól beneath is disturbed at thee, to meet thee at thy coming: it stirreth up for thee the shades, all the [c] bell-wethers

[a] So Sept., Pesh., Targ., Ges., Ew., Weir, Naeg.—Text, golden (city).
[b] So Döderlein, Ges., Ew., Alexander.—Text, persecution.
[c] So Kay.

shāl, i.e., a parallelistic poem (*Dichtung*)—the parallelism may consist either in the moral application of emblems, or simply in the parallel disposition of the lines and the sense. From the fact that emblems were generally applied in a witty, satirical manner, *māshāl* sometimes obtains the meaning of taunt-song, as here, and in Mic. ii. 4, Hab. ii. 6. Sept., misled by the bitter affectation of condolence in *vv.* 10, 12, translates *θρῆνον*, a rendering of *māshāl* which is nowhere else found.—The song falls into five strophes, each consisting of seven long lines (*v.* 17 *b* is the only exception). This, however, involves accepting Ewald's arrangement of *vv.* 19, 20 (see end of note on *v.* 20). Verses 22 and 23 form an epilogue or appendix.

[7] **They burst out . . .**] The phrase only occurs besides in II. Isaiah (4 times); the verb also in Ps. xcviii. 4 (comp. Isa. lii. 9).

[8] **The fir-trees**] According to Dr. Tristram (ap. Kay), the Hebr. *b'rōsh* is 'one of the most characteristic trees of Lower Lebanon, the Aleppo pine, which is inferior only to the cedar.'——**Rejoice at thee**] The poet knows nothing of our modern dualism. Man and nature sympathise (comp. Gen. iii. 18). The passage is therefore not really parallel to Virgil's 'Intonsi montes,' &c. (see Conington's *Virgil*, vol. I., Introduction.) But why are the trees of Lebanon mentioned? Because they had been cut down (a type of Israel's ruin) by the Babylonians, see on xxxvii. 24.

[9] **Sheól is disturbed**] Starts up in excitement on the arrival of so eminent a stranger. The same verb is applied to the shade of Samuel (1 Sam. xxviii. 15). In this first clause, therefore, Sheól may perhaps be used collectively of the entire population of shades.[1] In the next clause, however, the choice of the verb and the change of gender from feminine to masculine indicates that Sheól is personified as a single Will, whose electrifying influence not even kingly shades can resist. The personification (*audacissima* Rosenmüller) may be aided by a lingering consciousness of the original mythical demigod Sheól (if the theory offered on v.

[1] Comp. a strikingly parallel description of Amenti, the Egyptian Hades, translated from a papyrus by Lepsius, and Englished in Bonwick's *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*, pp. 46, 47.

of the earth; it maketh to arise from their thrones all the kings of the nations. [10] They all answer and say unto thee, Thou also art made weak as we; thou art made like unto us! [11] Thy pride is brought down to Sheól, (and) the sound of thy cymbals: beneath thee the maggot is spread out, and thy covering is the worm!

[12] How art thou fallen from heavens, O Shining One, son

14 be correct).——**Stirreth up the shades**] The 'shades' are the 'weak,' the 'nerveless,' as their name in Hebr. and Phœnician (*r'fāim*) indicates—comp. *εἴδωλα καμόντων*. Hence they need to be 'stirred up.' A similar phrase occurs in the Babylonio-Assyrian Legend of Ishtar (ed. Schrader, pp. 8, 9), where the goddess Ishtar threatens that she will 'stir up the dead.'——**The bell-wethers**] i.e., the princes. So Zech. x. 3, comp. Jer. l. 8, and so in Accadian and Assyrian (younger Del.). Bell-wethers and rams are frequently used as figures in Arab war-songs (Kremer), and a Hebrew proverb-writer, in a list of comely things, mentions a he-goat and a king. Comp. Tristram's *Natural History of the Bible*, p. 88.——**Maketh to arise . . .**] If we may interpret this on the analogy of the superstitions of primitive races elsewhere, it would seem to indicate a lingering popular belief among the Jews that the political and social relations once formed were not interrupted by death. Once a king, for ever a king. (Again comp. the Legend of Ishtar.) Hence the kings here are said to be seated on their thrones; hence the dead warriors in Ezek. xxxii. 27, have their swords buried with them (to ensure a phantom-sword in Sheól); and hence the prophet Samuel is said to come up from Sheól wearing his accustomed robe (1 Sam. xxviii. 14). It would seem, too, as if the kings and warriors were believed to have a whole compartment of Sheól to themselves (see on v. 14).

[10] The astonishment of the kings at the fall of so great a being (comp. Lucian's 13th Dialogue of the Dead (*ad init.*).——**Shall answer**] 'To answer' is used widely in Hebrew. Sometimes the question is expressed, sometimes only suggested by the circumstances as here (comp. Job iii. 2). Here the address of the shades is at an end.

[11] Contains a triumphal exclamation of the Jews. The cause of their joy only comes out by degrees. First, it seems to be the cessation of all that pomp and luxury for which Babylon was famous. Then, the collapse of the king's blasphemous dreams of deification. Finally, the insults heaped upon his dead body are detailed. ——**The sound of thy cymbals**] On Babylonian music, comp. Dan. iii. 5, &c., and Prof. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, iii. 19, 20.——**Beneath thee . . .**] Worms are his only cushion and coverlet.

[12] **How art thou fallen . . .**] In his pride and splendour the king of Babylon was like the morning-star (comp. Rev. xxii. 16), here described as a '*son* of the Dawn' (the Dawn, personified, is a relic of the mythic stage, comp. in the Hebr. Job iii. 9, xli. 10, Ps. cxxxix. 11). The Assyrian texts refer to a masculine as well as a feminine Venus. The former had a title (*mustèlil*) closely related to the Hebr. *hêlêl*, rendered here 'Shining One'; its period was from sunset onwards, that of the feminine Venus from sunrise onwards.[1] Kosters[2] finds here an allusion,

[1] Oppert, *Journal Asiatique*, 1871, p. 448; Schrader, *Theol. Stud. u. Kritiken*, 1874, p. 337; Fried. Delitzsch, German translation of Smith's *Chald. Genesis*, p. 271.
[2] *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1876, p. 50.

of the Dawn! how art thou hewn down to the ground, who didst overpower the nations! [13] And *thou* didst say in thine heart, To the heavens will I go up, above the stars of God will I raise my throne, and I will sit on the mountain of assembly, in the recesses of the north; [14] I will go up above

parallel to that in xxiv. 21, to the belief in the jurisdiction of the star-spirits over the kingdoms of the earth. This seems to be supported by the words of the king in the next verse (on which Dr. Kay propounds a similar view).

13, 14 The sin of the king of Babylon, self-deification. Let me remark here that, amply justified as the Hebrew poet is by the language of some parts of the inscriptions, the sentiment of humility and repentance was not unknown to the kings of Assyria and Babylon. 'Ils savaient faire un retour sur eux-mêmes, et s'avouer pécheurs sous les coups qui les frappaient.'[1] They were 'gods of the nations' (Ezek. xxxi. 11), but avowed their weakness before the only 'great gods.' ——**And thou**] (*thou*, who art brought so low) . . . **To the heavens will I go up**] This is not a mere hyperbole of rhetorical origin (as perhaps in Job xx. 6), any more than the salutation 'O king, live for ever!' is a mere hyperbole; it has rather a solid foundation in primitive religious belief. We must not, however, connect it with the stories of Titans scaling the heavens, but with the Oriental belief in kings as incarnations of the Divine. The Egyptians, no doubt, went furthest in this direction, but the Assyrian kings (e.g., Shalmaneser and Assurbanipal) are distinctly called sons of this and that deity. It was but rational to go further, and admit these semi-divine beings to a share in the family life of their celestial parents. I do not know that this can be proved as yet in the case of the Assyrians and Babylonians, though the mention of the 'land of the silver sky' (= heaven), in the Royal Psalm translated by Schrader, and less accurately by Fox Talbot,[2] confirms the conjecture that such a belief existed. Even apart from this, we have the same right to use the statement of the prophet as to a Babylonian belief that we have to use the parallel statement of Ezekiel relative to the Tyrian doctrine on the same subject (Ezek. xxviii. 2, 6, 9, 13, 14). How largely this view increases the force of the passage, I need hardly point out. The king of Babylon expected to join the ranks of the gods. No, replies the prophet, thou shalt be hurled down to Sheôl (*v.* 15).——**The mountain of assembly**] or . . . of meeting. The expression is not found elsewhere, but the meaning is clear. It is a mountain whose summit is among 'the stars of God,' and whose base is 'in the recesses of the north.' Mount Zion, which the ancient writers fix upon with one consent (comp. 'tent of assembly,' or 'of meeting' Ex. xxvii. 21, &c.), is therefore at once excluded, unless, with Dr. Weir, we regard it 'with the eye of faith' as the Zion of the Messianic age, which shall be 'exalted above the hills' (ii. 2; comp. Heb. xii. 22–24), and even then we have only tried to remove half the difficulty, for from a Hebrew point of view Jerusalem was the *centre* of the earth (Ezek. v. 5), and from a Babylonian certainly not in the extreme north. No one probably would have thought of mount Zion, were it not for the apparent parallelism of Ps. xlviii. 2 (3): 'Beautiful of elevation, the joy of the whole earth, mount Zion, the recesses of the north, the city of the great King.' What this pas-

[1] Lenormant, *La divination*, p. 212.

[2] *Records of the Past*, iii. 133.

the heights of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High. [15] Nevertheless, thou art brought down to Sheól, to the recesses of the pit.

sage means, no one has yet been able satisfactorily to explain, and we have no right to interpret a clear passage by our private hypothesis respecting an obscure one. Dr. Weir's candid concession, however, greatly simplifies the discussion between the advocates and the adversaries of the traditional explanation. Let it be granted, for the moment, that the Babylonian king presumes to lord it over the sacred mountain of Israel. Still it is not of that mountain in its phenomenal but in its ideal character that he speaks—not of mount Zion as it appears, but as it is before God, and will be one day before men. Now a conception of this kind would be unintelligible to a Babylonian, unless he could connect it with some similar beliefs of his own people. That similar beliefs existed among the Indians, Iranians, Greeks, and other races, has long been known, but it is only since the recent advances of Assyriology that we have learned their existence among the Assyrians and Babylonians. Among the titles of the great god Assur is 'king of all the assembly of the great gods' (Sayce, *Records of the Past*, iii. 83), and there is a fragment of Berosus (*Moses of Khorene*, i. 7), which speaks of a *mountain* of the assembly of the gods. In the inscriptions this mountain is most frequently described as 'the mountain of the east.'[1]) If we suppose the Babylonian king to be referring directly to a mountain of his own mythology, we may, I think, maintain the substantial agreement of the description in the song with the title found in the inscriptions, the east and the north being both used loosely for north-east (comp. Del. on Ps. xlviii. 3). But all must admit the analogy between the Babylonian 'mountain of the east,' and the idealised mount Zion.[2] Another Babylonian title for the former was 'the mountain of the world,' indicating, I suppose, that it reached from earth to heaven.—Originally, no doubt, this mountain was purely mythic, and so to speak extra-geographical. Afterwards it became fixed to an earthly site, and not always the same site. There is some fragmentary evidence that the position of the sacred mountain of the primitive Semites fluctuated, like the position of the mountain of the flood. Such a mountain must have played a large part in the thoughts of a Babylonian king respecting his life after death, and we are not surprised to hear that the capital of the empire contained a Temple of the Mountain of the World, sacred to Bel.[3]

I have stated above why it seems to me impossible to identify the 'mountain of assembly' in the song with mount Zion (in any sense). We are not bound, however, to identify it with any specially Babylonian mythic mountain. To do so no doubt gives an additional appropriateness to the supposed speech of the king, but Ezek. xxviii. 13, 14 proves that there was a tradition, analogous in form, among the Jews themselves, of a 'holy mountain of Elohim,' on the slopes of which lay the garden or rather paradise (park)

[1] The famous Inscription of Khorsabad speaks of the supreme gods, 'who reign eternally (rather, steadfastly) in the temple (lit. house) of the great mountain of the east,' Lenormant, *Études accadiennes*, i. 3, 73.

[2] Comp. a striking passage from Euseb. *De Martyr. Palæst.* c. 11, referred to by Tholuck on Heb. xii. 22.

[3] Boscawen, letter in the *Academy*, viii. p. 578, containing a translation of a Hymn to this sacred mountain, the Babylonian Olympus.

16 Those who see thee shall look narrowly and gaze earnestly at thee, 'Is this the man who made the earth to tremble, who made kingdoms to quake, 17 who made the world as a wilderness, and broke down the cities thereof; who released not his prisoners to their home?' 18 All the kings of the earth, even all of them, lie in honour, each one in his house; 19 and *thou* art flung away from thy grave, as an abhorred shoot, clothed with those who are slain, who are thrust through with the sword, as a carcase trodden under foot.

20 [d] Those who have gone down to the stones of the pit,[d]

[d] This forms part of the last line but one of *v.* 19 in Hebr. text. *See* below.

of Eden.[1] This tradition is quite sufficient to account for the language poetically given to the Babylonian monarch.——**The recesses of the north**] A vague expression (see above). There was a mysterious awe attaching to the north among various ancient nations. Ewald has referred to Lev. i. 11, Ezek. i. 4. The Sabians in Harran turned to the north in prayer (En-Nedîm, ap. Chwolson). Comp. also Servius ad Virg. *Æn.* ii. 693, &c., *Laws of Manu*, i. 67, ii. 52, 70.

14 **The Most High**] A favourite phrase in Daniel, and in the Apocrypha. See Plumptre, *Biblical Studies*, pp. 17–36; Geiger, *Urschrift*, p. 33.

15 **Nevertheless**] Or, 'only' (the adversative sense being acquired from the context). Said in grave satire. Not to the recesses (or far parts) of the north, but to those of the pit. Instead of sharing the full vitality of the gods, thou art become a feeble melancholy shade! Obs. the conceptions of the pit (or grave) and Sheól tend towards fusion. Comp. lxvi. 24 (note), where only the torments of the dead body are spoken of, but those of the soul (or shade) are equally in the mind of the writer, and are only not described from his sense of their indescribableness.

16-19 A further reason for the triumph of the singers of the *mâshâl*. The scene is the field of battle (as lxvi. 24); the object of contemplation, no longer the feeble shade, but the unburied corpse.

18 Other kings, of more modest pretensions, are buried honourably, **each one in his house**, i.e., in a sepulchre of his own. The trouble which Egyptian kings took about their pyramid-graves is well known. The Babylonian tyrant, too, had built one for himself ('thy grave'), but was never to occupy it. 'House' = grave, as in Eccles. xii. 5; 'his (man's) perpetual house,' and as in Phœnician ('*Melit.* ii. 1') and Egyptian (Ebers, *Aegypten*, i. 169).——**Clothed**] But not with grave-clothes!

20 A curse supposed to be pronounced upon the king and his family (Ex. xx. 5)—still upon the field of battle. He himself is excluded from burial with his predecessors—for a king the highest possible disgrace (2 Chr. xxi. 20, xxiv. 25, Jer. xxii. 19, Ezek. xxix. 5). The phraseology of the curse may be paralleled from various sources—Greek, Egyptian, Assyrian, Babylonian, Phœnician. For the four former, see Ebers, *Aegypten*, i. 169; Schlottmann, *Eschmunazar*, p. 37; *Records of the Past*, v. 26, ix. 36; and for the latter comp. these lines from the Inscr. of Esh-

[1] Comp. Dante's Terrestrial Paradise on the summit of the mountain of Purgatory.

with those thou shalt not be joined in burial, because thou hast destroyed thy land and slain thy people: unnamed for ever shall be the seed of evil-doers! [21] Prepare ye for his sons a place of slaughter, because of the iniquity of their fathers; that they may not arise nor take the land in possession, nor fill the face of the world with • heaps.

[22] And I will arise against them, is the oracle of Jehovah Sabáoth, and cut off from Babylon name and remnant, and progeny and offspring, is the oracle of Jehovah. [23] And I will make it a possession of the bittern, and pools of water, and will sweep it with the besom of destruction, is the oracle of Jehovah Sabáoth.

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vv. 24–27. A solemn repetition of Jehovah's assurance of the impending destruction of the Assyrian invaders. The circumstances closely resemble those of chap. x. 5–xii. 6; and a part of *v.* 25 is almost identical with a part of x. 27. This passage is, however, clearly distinct from the former prophecy; it is not a misplaced fragment, as we might be tempted to conjecture.

[24] Sworn has Jehovah Sabáoth, saying, Surely, according as I have planned, so shall it be; and according as I have purposed, that shall stand; [25] to break Assyria in my land,

• So Hitz.—Terrible ones, Ew.—Cities (or, enemies, Targ., Ges.), Hebr. text.

munazar, king of Sidon (iv. 4–6 Schl.): 'Let him (the king who opens the lid of this couch) not have a couch with the shades, and let him not be buried in the grave, and let him not have son and seed in his stead.' Thus, the king of Babylon is mulcted of immortality in two senses: he neither drinks of the water of life with the gods (comp. on *v.* 13), nor lives again (according to the old Semitic view) in his children. And the cause of all this (regarding the sin of the king from a fresh point of view) is that his ambitious wars have been the ruin of his country—**because thou hast destroyed thy land, &c.** The words here placed at the head of the verse have received a most unsuitable place in the received text. It is difficult, in fact, to make any strict exegesis of them there. How is it possible that those who have been slain by the side of the king of Babylon should be described as 'those who are buried in a costly tomb built of hewn stones'? for such is clearly the meaning of the words **those who have gone down** (or, go down) **to the stones of the pit.** Surely this was a most unlikely honour for the masses of the slain! Ewald's arrangement is both natural in itself, and greatly relieves *v.* 19, which before was awkwardly long.——**Heaps**] i.e., ruined cities; comp. xvii. 1, Ps. lxxix. 1. 'Cities' gives no good sense. Why should cities be denounced so unqualifiedly? See crit. note.

[22. 23] The song is at an end, and is supplemented by a direct revelation from Jehovah, extending the punishment to the whole of Babylon.—The assonances in *v.* 22 are inimitable.——**Bittern**] Generally rendered 'hedgehog'; but this is not

and upon my mountains to tread him under foot, and his yoke shall remove from off them, and his burden remove from off his back. [26] This is the purpose which is purposed concerning all the earth, and this is the hand which is stretched out over all the nations. [27] For Jehovah Sabáoth hath purposed, and who can annul it, and his is the outstretched hand, and who can turn it back?

vv. 28–32. The Philistines are exulting over the death of their oppressor; but the prophet sees that their joy is premature. Meantime Judah is enjoying repose after her troubles.—This is the first of a series of prophecies on foreign nations called forth by the alarming progress of the Assyrians. 'Out of the north a smoke cometh.' It is disputed whether the king of Assyria, whose hosts are referred to, is Tiglath-Pileser or Sargon. The late Mr. George Smith (*Transactions of Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, ii. 325) supposed him to be the former, but his argument is embarrassed by (as it seems to me) a conjectural reconstruction of this period of Assyrian history. The analogy of at least seven other prophecies in which only Sargon can be referred to has induced me elsewhere to include this prophecy in the same series. It has also been doubted whether both the persons spoken of in the prophecy, the one under the figure of a 'rod' or a 'serpent,' the other under that of a 'basilisk,' are Assyrian kings, or whether only the latter is so, the former being the Jewish king, Ahaz (so *I. C. A.*, after Ewald). It is certainly most natural to understand them as successive Assyrian kings, and the only objection is the chronological statement in the heading, which implies that Ahaz is the rod which was broken, and consequently that the depredations of the Philistines in the land of Judah (2 Chr. xxviii. 18) supplied the motive for the prophecy. But the genuineness of this, as of other headings in Isaiah, is very questionable (see *I. C. A.*, p. 41); the heading seems to me to have originated in a fancy of one of the editors of Isaiah that 'the rod' meant Ahaz, and the basilisk Hezekiah, a fancy which is obviously contradicted by the description of the Jews as being (though secure themselves from attack) 'poor' and 'helpless,' in fact, as incapable of taking vengeance or making conquests.

[28] [In the death-year of king Ahaz came this utterance].

a marsh-loving animal (Houghton). **——The besom of destruction**] Dr. Goldziher's reference to a supposed myth (*Hebrew Mythology*, p. 27) is ingenious, but unnecessary; comp. 'the sieve of annihilation' (xxx. 28).

[25] **My mountains**] It would seem as if the Assyrians were now encamped on the hills of Judah before Jerusalem (comp. x. 32). The same phrase in xlix. 11, lxv. 9, Zech. xiv. 5, Ezek. xxxviii. 21. It reminds us of the fancy of the Syrians that Jehovah was 'a god of the mountains' (1 Kings xx. 23).

[26] **All the earth**] Partly because this is an act of the great drama of the world-judgment; partly because of the solidarity of all nations—'when one member suffers, all the members suffer with it.'

[28] **In the death-year . . .**] i.e., before the death of Ahaz (comp. on

29 Rejoice not, entire Philistia, that the rod which smote thee
is broken, for out of the serpent's root shall come forth a basi-
lisk, and its fruit is a flying dragon. 30 And [f]the first-born
of[f] the poor shall feed, and the needy shall securely lie down,
but I will kill thy root with famine, and thy remnant shall he
slay. 31 Howl, O gate; cry, O city; faint, entire Philistia:
for out of the north a smoke cometh, and there is no straggler
in his bands. 32 And what shall one answer the messengers of
the nations? That Jehovah hath founded Zion, and in her
the afflicted of his people can seek refuge.

[f] On my meadows, Hupfeld (conj.).

CHAPTERS XV.–XVI.

UNDOUBTEDLY a prophecy against Moab (see xvi. 13). I am not myself certain whether the predictive element pervades the whole prophecy, or whether it is confined (at any rate in chap. xv.) to *v.* 9*b*. All critics, however, except Eichhorn, adopt the former alternative, according to which the invasion of Moab is still future; and the prophet, with vivid imagination, describes what the inhabitants of the different localities will feel, say, and do in their distress. The vision (as it may laxly be termed)

vi. 1).——**Entire Philistia**] Alluding to the principalities into which Philistia was divided (comp. Isa. ix. 8 Hebr.).——**The rod**] So Assyria is called in ix. 4, x. 5, (20), 24, 26; and Babylon in xiv. 5, 6. 'Root' and 'fruit' in the sequel are suggested by the 'rod.'——**A basilisk**] Comp. xi. 8.——**A flying dragon**] A popular belief used poetically (comp. parallels in xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14, 15)—not a lightning-myth, as Goldziher, but to be compared with the flying white serpents of Arabic literature (*'Aghâny*, xx. 135'), which were really *jinn* or malicious genii. Kremer well accounts for this from the ghost-like ways of serpents (*Culturgeschichte des Orients*, ii. 257). Herodotus (ii. 75, comp. iii. 107) also refers to winged serpents which invaded Egypt from Arabia—a 'traveller's tale.' Comp. on xxx. 6.—Here the 'dragon' is the symbol of a destructive power (comp. xxvii. 1). The Hebr. is *saraf*; comp. Seraphim (vi. 2 note).

30 **The first-born of the poor**] i.e., the most needy, as 'the sons of the poor' (Ps. lxxii. 4) are simply the poor. Comp. Job xviii. 13. But Hupfeld's conjecture (see above) is attractive.——**I will kill . . . he shall slay**] Change of persons, as in Zech. ix. 10. The subject is Jehovah.

31 **O gate**] So the wall is personified in Lam. ii. 8; comp. 18.——**Out of the north**] So of the Babylonian invasion; Jer. i. 14, x. 22, xlvi. 20, xlvii. 2. Comp. Isa. x. 28–32.——**A smoke**] It is the smoke of the towns and villages burnt by the Assyrians.

32 **The messengers of the nations**] Seeking in hot haste to form defensive alliances. The Philistines would not be the only people to send an embassy; comp. Jer. xxvii. 3.——**Hath founded Zion**] Jerusalem is secured, not by its natural defences, but by its God. Comp. xxviii. 16.

falls into three parts (xv. 1–9, xvi. 1–5, 6–12), and is followed by two verses announcing the speedy fulfilment of that which 'Jehovah hath spoken formerly.'

These two appended verses are admitted by all critics (except Bleek and Geiger) to be the work of Isaiah. But there is a difference of opinion as to the authorship of the preceding prophecy. The statement in the appendix may mean either that Isaiah adopts and ratifies the work of an earlier prophet, or simply that he is now enabled to give a more specific revelation. We have already had an instance of the case supposed by the former alternative in ii. 2–4, and Jeremiah has adopted and expanded this very oracle in part of chap. xlviii. The conjecture of non-Isaianic authorship is therefore a perfectly natural one; can it also be said to be required by the contents of the prophecy? The reasons for an affirmative answer are two:—1. The flow of sympathy, unparalleled in Isaiah, towards the objects of the predicted judgment; 2. The writer's minute acquaintance with Moabitish topography, which points to a N. Israelite; and, 3. The tediousness and archaic simplicity of the style (note the accumulation of assonances in the Hebrew, and of 'for' and 'therefore'), combined with certain words and phrases unknown to Isaiah. On the other hand, it is urged 1. that Isaiah does occasionally give way to an elegiac mood (see i. 2–6, 21, xxii. 4, xxviii. 1–4), and though the other instances of this relate to Judah or Israel, the historical connection between Israel and Moab may account for Isaiah's sympathy with this kindred people; and 2. (for the argument from the topographical knowledge, however slight, cannot be replied to) that the non-Isaianic words and phrases (Knobel's list requires sifting) may be balanced by the Isaianic parallels (?), especially in xvi. 4*b*, 5. My own impression is very strongly against the Isaianic authorship of the prophecy, *except the verse and a half just referred to.* I would not deny, however, that Isaiah may have altered words here and there, as Jeremiah did afterwards, and the obscurity of xvi. 1–4 leads me to conjecture that the original text has here been shortened.

It would be unwise to dogmatise as to the date of the original prophecy. It was at any rate subsequent to the revolt of Mesha, king of Moab, who, as we learn from the *Moabite Stone*, recovered and fortified ('built') the towns which Omri, king of Israel, had destroyed. Seven (probably) of the names in this prophecy are mentioned in the Moabitish inscription— Dibon, Nebo, Arnon, Jahaz, Medeba, Horonaim, Sibmah (see on xvi. 8). The north side of the Arnon seems to have been a battle-field of races (*I. C. A.*, p. 237).

The name of the foe of the Moabites is not mentioned, but the description points to a nomad or semi-nomad population, either the Arabs (Ew.) or the Israelitish tribes on the E. of the Jordan (Hitz.). As to the 'lion,' see on xv. 9.

[1] [Utterance of Moab.] For in the night Ar-Moab was stormed, was ruined! for in the night Kir-Moab was stormed,

1. **For**] This particle occurs no less than fourteen times in this and the next chapter. It is probably in all cases causal or ex-

was ruined! [2]He is gone up to the temple, even Dibon to the high places to weep: on Nebo and on Medeba Moab howleth; on all their heads is baldness; every beard is cut off. [3]In his (Moab's) streets they are girded with sackcloth;

planatory, and we may conjecture that words like 'Alas for Moab,' or 'Lament ye for Moab,' were in the mind of the writer (comp. xxiii. 1, 14), though in his lyric excitement he forgot to express them. Some have accounted for the frequency of the word 'for' as an imitation of a Moabitish peculiarity. This seems to be at any rate the case with the next word in the Hebrew (see Moabite Stone).——**In the night**] When the terrors of a stormed town would be at their height; comp. Ps. xci. 5, 'the terror by night.' Mesha, king of Moab, boasts of having assaulted Nebo at dawn (Moabite Stone, *l.* 15).——**Ar-Moab**] i.e., citadel of Moab. This was clearly the capital; it seems to be the unnamed city described in Josh. xiii. 9, 16, and also the Areopolis mentioned in Eusebius and Stephen of Byzantium, and in the acts of Synods of the fifth and sixth centuries.——**Kir-Moab**] i.e., city of Moab. Probably the still existing Kerak (the 'Petra Deserta' of the middle ages), which rises on a peak more than 4,000 feet above the Dead Sea (Dr. Ginsburg, however, disputes this and the last identification). Targ. *k'rakkā* = 'fortress.'—Obs. no less than nineteen or twenty Moabite towns are mentioned in this and the next chapter. A similar profusion of names occurs in the inscription of king Mesha (the so-called Moabite Stone). These very early documents, combined with the many ruined cities and temples, the thousands of cisterns, and the roads paved with squared blocks, prove that the fertile plains of Moab were once occupied by a people not a whit inferior in civilisation to the Israelites.

[2] **He is gone up**] The subject of the verb must be borrowed from the second clause.——**The temple**] Lit. the house. No doubt the prophet means the Beth-bamoth ('House of High Places') of the inscription on the Moabite Stone (*l.* 27), which Schlottmann rightly identified with the Bamoth-Baal mentioned in Josh. xiii. 17 side by side with Dibon. Instead of simply saying 'Dibon is gone up to Beth-bamoth to weep,' the prophet breaks the clause into two, for there can be little doubt that 'the high places' in the second member of the verse means the same as 'the temple' in the first.——**Dibon**] i.e., its population, is naturally said to 'go up,' lying as it does in a plain ('the plain of Medeba unto Dibon' Josh. xiii. 9). It lies in a direct line north of Aroer and the Arnon. Here (its modern name is Dîbân) the famous Moabite Stone was found—and broken up, though it has been skilfully pieced together, as far as possible, and now rests in the Louvre. (See the English monograph on the Inscription by Dr. Ginsburg, and the German ones by Schlottmann and Nöldeke.—Dibon was one of the towns claimed by the Reubenites. Num. xxxii. 34. ——**On Nebo and on Medeba**] Nebo is of course not the mountain-range so-called, but a town near, deriving its name from the same old Semitic divinity. Medeba, at any rate, is on an eminence.——**On all their heads is baldness**] Comp. xxii. 12: 'And in that day did the Lord Jehovah Sabáoth call to weeping, and to mourning, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth,' Job i. 20, Mic. i. 16. Had this cutting of the hair originally a sacrificial import (comp. Deut. xiv. 1, and Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, ii. 364)? It may be so, but here it is merely symbolical. It was also the primitive Arabic

on his roofs and in his [a]broad places[a] he all together howleth, running down in weeping. [4]And Heshbon crieth out, and Elealeh; even to Jahaz their voice is heard; therefore the men at arms of Moab shriek, his soul quivereth within him. [5]My heart crieth out [b]for Moab—her [c]fugitives come even to Zoar, (to) the third Eglath[b]; for the ascent to Luhith—with weeping doth he ascend it, for in the way to Horonaim a cry

[a] Bazaars, Weir.—Market-places, Kay.

[b] For Moab (whose fugitives *have come* even to Zoar) the fat heifer, Ges. (1829). . . . her fugitives *have come* unto Zoar, even those of the fat heifer, Luzzatto. . . . whose bars (so Weir) *reached* even to Zoar—the fat heifer (so Naeg.), Vulg., Del.

[c] So Targ., Ges., Ew., Naeg., &c.—Bars, vowel-points, Vulg., Del., Weir.

custom; see Krehl, *Religion der vorislamit. Araber*, p. 33, note 1, and compare Herod. ii. 36.—Jeremiah further elaborates the description (xlviii. 37).

[3] **Running down . . .**] Lit. coming down. So Jeremiah, 'that our eyes may run down in tears' (ix. 18, comp. xiii. 17, xiv. 17). By a bold extension of the figure, the whole person is represented as immersed in tears.

[4] **Heshbon . . . Elealeh**] Neighbouring hill towns.——**Jahaz**] Far to the south, about midway between Heshbon and Kir-hareseth.——**His soul**] The Moabitish people is personified. In *v.* 5, the land of Moab is referred to in the feminine, as is usual with countries in Hebrew.

[5] The prophet now turns more to the south of Moab, first of all relieving his pent-up feelings.——**My heart crieth out**] On this deeply sympathetic language Calv. remarks:—'Est autem huiusmodi mos Prophetis, ut personam eorum induant, quibus calamitates prædicunt: ut eorum conditionem, tanquam in theatro, repræsentent. Sic enim magis afficiunt, quàm si simplici tantùm doctrinâ uterentur.' This seems too cold a view.——**Her fugitives**] This rendering suits the context best, though alt. rend. (whose bars—or 'defences,' as Jer. li. 30—*reached* unto Zoar), is no doubt recommended (Weir), by the fem. suffix. But the correctness of the text may be questioned. The word 'her—bars' or 'her—fugitives,' is wanting in the parallel passage, Jer. xlviii. 34.——**Zoar**] The well-known Zoar at the south end of the Dead Sea. The emigrants hope to get round by this way into the territory of Judah.——(**To**) **the third Eglath**] This rendering assumes that there were two other places in Moab called Eglath or Eglah. We know from Ezek. xlvii. 10 that there was a place called 'En 'Eglaim [comp. *v.* 8], which might be a synonym for the second 'Eglath at no great distance off; and Abulfeda, cited by Gesenius, mentions an 'Ejlûn on the other side of the Moabite border, which, from the perennial duration of Arabic names, may perhaps stand for the first 'Eglath (*Notes and Criticisms*, p. 20). Josephus, too, speaks of an Agalla (*Ant.* xiv. 1. 4), which may be one or another of the Eglaths. It must, however, be admitted that the existence of three Eglaths is somewhat hypothetical; feeling which some critics would render the phrase literally, 'a heifer of the third (year)'—i.e., one that has not yet been broken in for the yoke. This might be a metaphorical description either (*a*) of Zoar, which, in Christian times, was still a fortified place, and in the time of the prophet may perhaps have been a 'virgin fortress,' with a reputation for being impregnable; or (*b*) of the nation of the Moabites, 'hitherto flourishing and uncontrolled, but now three years old, and subjected to the yoke' (Alexander). Something can be said for each of these applications. For the latter, that the third year

of destruction they [a]shout. [6] For the waters of Nimrim become desolate; for withered is the grass, gone is the herbage, verdure there is none. [7] Therefore the abundance which they have acquired, and their store—over the torrent of the poplars must they carry it. [8] For the cry hath gone round the border of Moab; even to Eglaim its howling (hath reached), and to Beer Elim its howling. [9] For the waters of Dimon are full of blood; for I destine for Dimon fresh (evils), for the escaped ones of Moab a lion, and for the remnant of the land.

[a] So Lagarde.—Text, raise (?).

was that in which the heifer, according to Pliny, was broken in :—domitura boum in trimatu, postea sera, antea præmatura' (*Hist. Nat.*, viii. 4, 5, quoted by Ges.). For the former, that it makes the construction easier, and that the same title is apparently given to another Moabitish city (Horonaim) in Jer. xlviii. 34. The early Jewish critics too, appear, from the accentuation, to have explained the phrase of Zoar.——**Horonaim**] Probably on the borders of Edom; perhaps, too, the city of Sanballat, 'the Horonite.'

[6] To the capture of the cities of Moab and the flight of the inhabitants a fresh reason for lamentation is added, viz., that the 'crystal-clear' waters of Nimrim have been stopped up at their source by the enemy (comp. 2 Kings iii. 19, 25). These waters gave their name to the town Beth-Nimrâ (Num. xxxii. 36). The name Nimara occurs among the towns conquered by Thothmes III. Canon Tristram speaks of the 'plenteous brooks gushing from the lofty hills into the Ghor-en-Numeira' (comp. Nimrim); another site is proposed by Consul Wetzstein in the Wady So'êb, 3½ miles east of Jordan (ap. Delitzsch, *Genesis*, ed. 4, pp. 372, 3).

[7] The land of Moab being now uninhabitable, the Moabites cross the border into Edom, carrying what they can save of their property with them.——**The torrent of the poplars**] Not 'the torrent of the Arabs' (as Pesh., Saad., *not* Sept.), nor 'the torrent of the wastes' (as Hitz., Ew., Knob., cf. Am. vi. 14). Probably the Wady el-Ahsa, which formed the extreme northern boundary between Moab and Edom, and which is further identified with the torrent Zered, Num. xxi. 12, Deut. ii. 13. The poplar intended is the *Populus Euphratica*, the only Syrian habitat of which is the Ghor. See Wetzstein, ap. Del. *op. cit.* p. 567.

[8] No part of the land escapes.——**The cry**] i.e., the cry of destruction (*v.* 5).

[9] **The waters of Dimon**] i.e., the Arnon, just as the Kishon is described (Judg. v. 19) as the waters of Megiddo (Del.). It might with equal accuracy have been called 'the waters of Ar-Moab,' but the prophet wishes to enforce his words by a striking assonance. Dimon suggests the thought of *dâm* blood, as if it meant town of carnage. Comp. Sanguinetto = blood-stream, the name of a small brook which falls into Lake Thrasimene, the scene of Hannibal's great battle; comp. also the similar allusions in Mic. i. 10–15. Dr. Tristram thinks that Dimon (= modern Dimnah) is different from Dibon (*Land of Moab*, p. 105), but St. Jerome tells us that in his day the names were used indifferently for the same place.——**Fresh (evils) . . . a lion** (or, lions)] An enigmatical description of a conquering foe, either Judah (Hitz., Del., cf. Gen. xlix. 9), or (more probably—see xiv. 29, xxi. 16, 17, and comp. xvi. 4, 14) the Assyrians (Sargon?), who, as the Inscriptions prove, began to influence the fortunes of Palestine as early as the time of Ahab. For the figure, comp. v. 29, Jer. iv. 7.

CHAPTER XVI.

1 'Send ye [a]the lambs of the ruler[a] of the land from Sela
towards the wilderness, unto the mountain of the daughter of
Zion.' 2 And it shall come to pass: like wandering birds, (like)
a scattered nest, shall be the daughters of Moab at the fords of
Arnon. 3 'Apply counsel, do the work of an umpire, make
as the night thy shadow in the midst of the noon; shelter the
outcasts, him that wandereth betray not. 4 Let [b]the outcasts
of Moab[b] sojourn with thee, be thou a shelter unto them
from the face of the destroyer.' For at an end is the extor-

[a] Tribute, ye rulers, Grätz (conj.).
[b] So Sept., Pesh., Targ., Lowth, Ges., Hitz., Ew., Naeg., Weir.—My outcasts, O Moab. Vowel-points, Del.

Chap. xvi. Verses 1–6 are dramatic in style, and necessarily rather obscure, an indication of the names of the several speakers not being customary in Hebrew. It is very possible, too, that the text is either imperfect or misarranged.

1 **Send ye the lambs**] According to 2 Kings iii. 4, Mesha, king of Moab, 'rendered unto the king of Israel 100,000 lambs, and 100,000 rams, with the wool,' though on the death of Ahab he definitively renounced his allegiance. The prophet, as a devoted adherent of the Davidic family, exhorts the Moabites to renew their long-suspended tribute to their original suzerain, the king of Jerusalem (see 2 Sam. viii. 2); or, it may be, the chiefs of the Moabites exhort each other to take this step, as the power of the kingdom of Samaria is no longer adequate to the protection of Moab. It is a little uncertain whether this section presupposes the same situation as the preceding verses—whether, that is, the Moabitish fugitives are now in Edom (this would account for the mention of Sela in *v.* 1), or whether the prophet has shifted his point of view, and regards the Moabites as still on their own side of the border. In the latter case, the speaker or speakers of *v.* 1 recommend for the tribute-bearers the southern route, which passed by Sela and traversed the desert, because the north end of the Dead Sea is blocked up by the enemy. This view seems to be favoured by the next verse (see note). Dr. Weir suggests that *sela* (lit., rock, or collectively rocks), may mean the whole rocky region in the midst of which the city of Sela was situated; comp. Jer. xlviii. 28, 'Quit the cities, and dwell in the rocks' (*sela*).

2 We are not informed whether the counsel in *v.* 1 was accepted. But, at any rate, **the daughters of Moab**, i.e., the inhabitants of the various townships (see Ps. xlviii. 11, 'daughters of Judah'), collect with nervous anxiety at the fords of the Arnon—they prepare, that is, to flee in the opposite direction to that indicated in xv. 7. For the simile, comp. Ps. xi. 1, Prov. xxvii. 8.——**Nest**] i.e., nestlings, as Deut. xxxii. 11.

3, 4a An appeal to the humanity of some neighbouring people, apparently the Jews (see *v.* 1).——**Apply counsel**] So Kay. Or, 'carry into execution that which has been proposed,' comp. v. 19, xlvi. 11 Hebr. (Dr. Weir).——**Do the work of an umpire**] i.e., interpose in favour of the Moabites, and put down their oppressors.——**In the midst of the noon**] The

to pass: when Moab appeareth, when he wearieth himself on the high place, and cometh to his sanctuary to pray, [e]and prevaileth not, [then shall Moab be ashamed of Kemosh and turn unto Jehovah.[e]]—[13]This is the word which Jehovah spoke

[e] So Ew.—That he shall not prevail, Hebr. text.

this verse contains a mere repetition of the inability of Moab to save himself by supplication to his gods. Indeed, this would be inconsistent with *v.* 3, in which the Moabites are represented as throwing themselves entirely on the merciful consideration of Judah. The turn of the phrase itself indicates that a few words have fallen out of the text. To render it in the ordinary way ('. . . he shall not prevail') produces a mere tautology, for it has already been said that Moab's religious efforts are but a 'wearying of himself.' The parallelism, too, requires that as the words 'when he appeareth' are matched by 'and cometh to his high place to pray,' so the words 'when he wearieth himself' should be matched by 'and prevaileth not.' Further, the tender compassion of the prophetic writer for Moab leads us to expect that some happier prospect will be opened than a useless religious ceremony. Lastly, the idea of conversion as resulting from a terrible judgment lies at the very foundation of Old Testament prophecy. See also xix. 24, 25, lxvi. 19–21, Zeph. iii. 8, 9, Jer. xii. 15–17, and especially xlviii. 12, 13, comp. 47. From the latter passage, Ewald has with great sagacity restored what in all probability embodies the sense of the lost apodosis:—'Then shall Moab be ashamed of Kemosh his confidence, and turn unto Jehovah.' Dr. Weir objects that such an insertion is out of harmony with what immediately follows. But 1. the epilogue is, according to Ewald, not by the same hand as the prophecy, and 2. the epilogue does not contradict the statement of the inserted passage, that in his extremity Moab (or the remnant of Moab) shall turn to Jehovah.—**The high place**] Bāmōth, or 'high places,' is the general term for local sanctuaries among the Canaanitish peoples. The Israelites long persisted in worshipping at them (Kings, *passim*). The Phœnicians had them also (see the famous eight-lined Inscription of 'Umm-el-Awâmîd); and the Moabites, e.g. the stele of King Mesha is called a *bāmāh* (l. 3, 4).[1] The term is applied not only to the height, whether natural or artificial, on which an altar or sacred pillar was erected; but also by synecdoche, to the altar or sacred pillar without reference to its position. The stele of Mesha, for instance, was found in a depression between the two hillocks (*hârithein*, see on *v.* 7) on which the ruins of Dîbân stand, and the Israelites had Bāmōth in the Valley of Hinnom, Jer. vii. 31.——**And prevaileth not**] or, 'and is not able' (Ew., Geiger), i.e., is too full of despair to pray; but this seems too subtle.——**Kemosh**] The national god of the Moabites, but also the object of worship to other nations, for the name occurs in a Phœnician inscription found in Sicily (Gesenius, *Mon. Phœn.*, 159), also on a stone found by M. Renan in Phœnicia (*Mission de Phénicie*, p. 352), and in a name on an Assyrian inscription (*Revue archéologique*, 1866, p. 166).

[13] **Heretofore**] The phrase is quite vague, and would apply equally well to a much earlier prophecy, or to one of recent date. In Ps. xciii. 2 it is parallel with 'from everlasting,' but in Isa. xlviii. 7 it clearly means simply 'at an earlier period;' comp. xliv. 8, 2 Sam. xv. 34.

[14] **This is the word**] So Isaiah,

[1] . . . And I made this *bamah* to Kemosh in Qorkhah. . . . Because he delivered me out of all. . . .

concerning Moab heretofore. And now Jehovah hath spoken, saying, In three years, as the years of a hireling, the glory of Moab shall be disgraced, with all the great multitude, and the remnant shall be very small and powerless.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE impending ruin of Syria and Ephraim. At first this calamity is described as leaving nothing behind, but the second comparison leaves a door of escape for at least a remnant of Ephraim. Thus, in the prospects of the future, Isaiah steadfastly refuses to identify Israel altogether with Judah.

It is clear that this prophecy presupposes the alliance of Syria and Ephraim, referred to in vii. 1. Thus we have the end of the reign of Jotham for a *terminus a quo* (2 Kings xv. 37); the *terminus ad quem* is the captivity of Damascus and Samaria (2 Kings xvi. 9, xvii. 6). No allusion being made to the siege of Jerusalem, we are not obliged to come down much below the first-mentioned period. The calm tone of the prophecy contrasts strongly with the impassioned energy of ix. 8–x. 4; this prophecy is evidently the fruit of a more meditative mood.

[1][Utterance of Damascus.] Behold, Damascus is removed from being a city, and becometh [a]a ruin.[a] [2]Forsaken are the cities [b]of Aroer,[b] unto flocks shall they belong; and they shall

[a] A heap (?), a ruin, Hebr. text.
[b] For ever, Sept., Lowth, Lagarde.

xxxvii. 22.——**And now Jehovah hath spoken . . .**] Not 'But now,' as A. V. Isaiah recognises the old prophecy as a true revelation, and here supplements it by fuller details.——**In three years, as the years of a hireling**] i.e., speedily; there will be no grace-time (see on vii. 16). The same phrase in xxi. 16.——**Shall the glory . . .**] Thoroughly Isaianic, see xvii. 3, 4, xxi. 16; also x. 25, xxix. 17. The small and feeble 'remnant' of Moab corresponds to that of Israel. The 'remnant' of Israel, however, will be regenerated; is there not a gleam of hope for Moab? See on *v.* 12.

[1] Obs. the chief object of the prophetic headings is brevity. This heading does not entirely cover the contents of the prophecy. It is not by Isaiah (see on xiii. 1).——**Removed . . .**] Struck out, as it were, from the list of cities.——**A ruin**] See crit. note.

[2] **The cities of Aroer**] i.e., the cities of the trans-Jordanic region, among which were two named Aroer (see Mr. Grove's article in Smith's *Dictionary*). This particular district is mentioned, because the Assyrians would pass through it first on their invasion of Israel, and these particular cities because their name (Aroer = 'the laid bare') was significant of their fate. It is a short, enigmatical way of expressing what is said in full in Jer. li. 58 *a* (see the Hebrew). Bishop Lowth's and Lagarde's emendations (based on LXX.) are both unnecessary and unjust to the poetic peculiarities of the author.

lie down, none making them afraid. [3]And the fortress shall cease from Ephraim, and the kingdom from Damascus, and the remnant of Aram—like the glory of the children of Israel shall they be: an oracle of Jehovah Sabáoth.—[4]And it shall come to pass in that day: the glory of Jacob shall be enfeebled, and the fatness of his flesh shall become lean. [5]And it shall be as when [c]one gathereth standing corn at harvest,[c] and his arm reapeth the ears; yea, it shall be as with one who gathereth ears in the valley of Rephaim. [6]And gleanings shall be left thereof, as at the striking of an olive-tree, two or three berries at the uppermost point, four or five on the branches of the fruit-tree; an oracle of Jehovah, the God of Israel. [7]In that day shall the earth-born look toward his Maker, and his eyes shall have regard to the Holy One of Israel, [8]and he shall not look unto the altars the work of his

[c] So Luzzatto, Naeg.—The harvestman gathereth corn, A. E., Kimchi, Vitr., Ges., Del., Weir.—The harvest taketh away the corn, Ew.

—The paronomasia *'árey 'aróer* cannot be reproduced in English.

[3] **And the fortress . . .**] Having threatened Syria and Israel separately, the prophet now describes their common doom. Their fortresses and independent sovereignty shall cease—the prophet gives the former to Ephraim, and the latter to Damascus, but he means that both losses are experienced in common.——**Shall be like the glory . . .**] i.e., like that which is left of the glory of the Israelites. The meaning of this is unfolded in the following verses.

[4-6] The immediate prospects of Israel are described under three figures: 1. that of an emaciated body; 2. that of a harvest-field; and 3. that of beaten olive-trees.

[5] **His arm reapeth the ears**] 'Ears' is strictly accurate, as the Israelites cut off the stalk close under the ear. Indeed, every word of the description tells. Its effect is heightened by its being localised in **the valley of Rephaim**, a plain well known for its rich harvests, stretching to the S. W. of Jerusalem.

[6] A turning-point in the prophecy. Few, indeed, should be left of the inhabitants, and yet, by God's mercy, a few should be left (x. 22 is just parallel). Thus the doom of Israel is softened. Contrast the unbroken threatenings of the prophecy in ix. 8–x. 4 ——**Thereof**] i.e., of Jacob.——**As at the striking of an olive-tree**] The olive crop was gathered by beating (Deut. xxiv. 20), but the technical word for the beating is not used here. The 'striking' is supplementary to the 'beating;' this appears from xxiv. 13, where it is parallel to 'the grape-gleaning, when the vintage is done.' But the point of comparison is not the 'striking,' but the fewness of the berries remaining to be struck.

[7, 8] The religious revolution brought about by these calamities. ——**The earth-born**] Implying that the Israelites have forgotten the duty which they owe as creatures to the Creator. —— **The altars**] viz., those of the deities next mentioned. Comp. Hos. viii. 11, x. 1, xii. 11.

[8] **The Ashérahs**] i.e., the symbols of Ashérah, a goddess worshipped by the Canaanites as the

hands, and that which his fingers have made he shall not regard, and the Ashérahs and the sun-images [[d]he shall break up.[d]] [9]In that day his fortified cities shall be like the deserted places of [e]forests and hill-tops (?)[e] which men deserted before the children of Israel; and it shall become a desola-

[d] Not in Hebr. text.
[e] The Hivites and the Amorites, Sept., Lagarde.

giver (probably) of fertility and good fortune. In the times described in the historical books of the Old Testament, she seems to have been different from Ashtoreth, who is the Mesopotamian Ishtar. The symbol of Ashérah seems to have been a kind of artificial tree (comp. the sacred tree in the Assyrian sculptures)—see Judg. vi. 25, Deut xvi. 21, where the word for 'plant' means simply to set into the ground, as Eccles. xii. 11, and comp. the singular rendering of Vulg. 3 Kings xv. 13). It must be admitted, however, that side by side with the passages in which Ashérah (first letter Aleph), is spoken of as one of the chief deities worshipped by the Israelites, there are others in smaller number which mention Ashtoreth or the Ashtoreths (first letter Ayin), see Judg. x. 6 (comp. iii. 7), 1 Sam. vii. 3, 4, xii. 10. These passages, however, are doubtless due to a later editor, in whose time the distinction between the deities had been forgotten.—As to the derivation, Ashérah, as Dr. Tiele has pointed out, is probably the feminine of the Canaanitish god Asher = Assyr. *Asir* 'favourable' (properly 'straight, even, plain,' comp. the Hebrew phrase 'to smooth the face of any one,' i.e., to sue for his favour), comp. the proper name S'almanu-âsir 'Salman is kind.' Another form of the same word is Asur or Assur, the name of an Assyrian god and city, and Asurit, an epithet of the goddess Ishtar. Dr. Tiele is inclined to identify Asher and Assur, and the suggestion is well worth considering. It is, however, not absolutely necessary to identify all the deities who received the titles Asher or Ashérah, any more than it is to identify all those who were named Baal. See further Kuenen's *Religion of Israel*, i. 88–93, Tiele, *Vergelijkende Geschiedenis der oude Godsdiensten*, I. i. pp. 462–3, 810, Movers, *Die Phönizier*, I. i. pp. 561–2.——**The sun-images**] i.e., the figures of Baal Hamman, the sun-god, often spoken of in Phœnician votive inscriptions. (Comp. Hebr. *ḥammah* 'heat' used poetically for the 'sun.') There is a trace of this cultus in Hammon, the name of a place in N. Palestine, Josh. xix. 28, 1 Chr. vi. 76. In 2 Chr. xxxiv. 4 these figures are mentioned as standing on the altars of Baal. Perhaps they were modifications of the conical stones, which, at any rate, among Turanian peoples, symbolize the generative power of the sun. Comp. Movers, *Die Phönizier*, I. i. p. 411.—A verb seems wanting at the end of the verse, as Lagarde points out.

[9 11] Here the prophet drops the subject of the Israelitish penitents. In xxviii. 5, it is apparently implied that they were to share the prosperity of the pious kernel of Judah. Of N. Israel in general it is stated that its infidelity shall be punished by a desolation like that which ancient Canaan experienced at the hand of the Israelites.——**Deserted places**] i.e., ruins. Forests and hill-tops are mentioned as the usual sites of fortresses (2 Chr. xxvii. 4). Towns adapted for a large population only changed their inhabitants (Deut. vi. 10). On the reading see crit. note.——**It shall become**] Viz., the land.

tion. [10] For thou didst forget the God of thy welfare, and the Rock of thy fortress thou rememberedst not, therefore thou didst plant [f]plants of Adonis,[f] and with vine-slips of a stranger didst sow it: [11] in the day of thy planting thou didst make a hedge, and in the morning didst make thy seed to blossom—[g]a harvest-heap[g] in the day of sickness and incurable pain.

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vv. 12-14. *The sudden destruction of the Assyrian army.*[1]—'The three last verses of this chapter seem to have no relation to the foregoing prophecy, to which they are joined. It is a beautiful piece, standing singly and by itself; for neither has it any connection with what follows; whether it stands in its right place or not, I cannot say.' I quite agree both with what Bishop Lowth here asserts and with what he suggests. An unforced connection with xvii. 1–11 cannot be produced; and though most recent critics connect these three verses with chap. xviii., the concluding words of *v.* 14 are decidedly against this; besides which, there are no phraseological affinities in *vv.* 12–14 to chap. xviii., and the former passage describes the ruin of the enemy under an image which is clearly inconsistent with those in chap. xviii. In my book on the Old Testament

[f] Pleasant plantations, Del., Naeg., Weir, &c.
[g] Fled is the harvest, Ges., Ew., Weir.

[10] **The rock . . .**] See on xxx. 29, xxvii. 5. —**Plants of Adonis**] Comp. on lxvi. 17. The ordinary rend. does not give a suitable contrast. The Israelites have forsaken their Rock (a religious term), therefore they have planted pleasant gardens. Nor does it suit the immediate context. The term 'stranger' in 'vine-slips of a stranger' is most naturally taken as = 'a strange god'; comp. on xliii. 12. We are therefore almost compelled, as Ew. first saw, to explain the parallel word (Hebr. *na'amānīm*) as a Divine title, even if there be no evidence of its being such still extant. There were so many Divine epithets, often used by themselves as Divine names, that it would be no wonder if some had left few traces. But we have some presumptive evidence. There is the proper name Naaman 'the Syrian' (2 Kings v. 1), and its Arabian equivalent, No'mân (the name of a king in Tebrîzî's scholia to *Hamâsa*); proper names like these have always a claim to be interpreted as Divine titles, if possible. There is also Nahr No'mân, the modern Arabic name of the river Belus, near Acco (Acre)—in the head-quarters of the ancient cultus of Adonis. Lastly, there is a singular Arabic name for the red anemone, given in Lane's magnificent Lexicon, p. 1578, *shakâiku-'n-no'mân*, explained first by Lagarde as 'the wounds of Adonis,' and evidently a phrase of primitive origin (hence the word *anemone*). Lagarde well compares the αἷμα Ἀθηνᾶς (*Semitica*, p. 32). Classical students will of themselves compare Isaiah's phrase with the Ἀδώνιδος κῆποι, the proverbial phrase for something which arises quickly, but does not last. First mentioned in Plato's *Phædrus*, p. 276*b*. There is, I think, a similar proverbial application of the Hebrew phrase included in the meaning here. —**Sow**] Used inexactly for 'plant.'

[11] **A harvest-heap**] i.e., the flourishing plantation shall become like a heap of reaped corn. As Hupfeld points out (after Clericus),

[1] Not that of Rezin and Pekah (Hitzig), see 'xxix. 5, xxxi. 8, 9, xxxiii. 1, 3, where the reference to the Assyrians is unquestionable' (*I. C. A.*, p. 93).

I venture to place this brief but well-rounded prophecy during the victorious march of the *corps d'armée* which seems to have been detached by Sennacherib from his main army at Lachish to force Judah back into allegiance to Assyria. It seems to have been framed on the rhythmic model of the slightly earlier prophecy, chap. xviii., and is one of the most vigorous and picturesque in Isaiah's works.

12 Ah, the tumult of many peoples, like the tumult of the seas
they are tumultuous; and the uproar of nations, like the roaring of mighty waters, they roar! 13 The nations—like the
roaring of mighty waters they make an uproar, but he rebuketh it, and it fleeth far away, and is chased like the chaff
of the mountains before the wind, and like a whirling thing
before the hurricane. 14 At eventide, behold terror! before
morning, it is gone! This is the portion of those who spoil
us, and the lot of those who plunder us.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE sudden destruction of the Assyrians, and the homage of Ethiopia to Jehovah. Such is the prophet's theme, which is worked out in a most picturesque and dramatic way. The king of Ethiopia, stirred by the approach of the Assyrians, is sending messengers in the light river-vessels to spread the news through the empire as rapidly as possible, and to call

'heap' (*nēd*) is used in this special sense in Ex. xv. 8, Ps. xxxiii. 7, lxxviii. 13. So too Del., who compares the use of 'harvest' for God's judicial punishment in Hos. vi. 11, Jer. li. 33. Thus we have in the same prophecy a double application of the figure of harvest, first to the Assyrians 'reaping a harvest of cities and their inhabitants,' and then to the Israelites 'transplanting heathen gods into their worship, and reaping God's abandonment of their nation as the fruit' (Strachey).

12 Isaiah on his 'watch-tower' hears, and we seem to hear with him, the roar of the advancing Assyrian hosts. Full of sympathetic surprise at the tragic spectacle, he exclaims, **Ah! the tumult of many peoples** (alluding to the varied composition of the Assyrian army). The particle rendered 'Ah'! has several meanings, and the context must decide which is to be preferred. Del. takes it to be expressive here of indignation (as i. 4, x. 1), and in xviii. 1 of pity (as lv. 1). ——**He rebuketh it**] Obs. how the short clauses crowd upon each other in sharp contrast to the long-drawn-out clauses which precede. So quickly follow the blows of Divine vengeance. The tense in the Hebr. is the perfect or 'fact-tense' as it may be called. The prophet is set free from all personal feeling, and describes the events which loom as it were bodily before him. ——**It**] Or, him; see on v. 26. ——**The chaff of the mountains**] Threshing-floors being usually on high ground, for the sake of the current of wind (1 Sam. xix. 22 Sept., 2 Sam. xxiv. 18, 2 Chr. iii. 1).

14 The judgment upon the Assyrians is to begin in the evening, and to end before morning in their complete destruction. Comp. xxix. 7, 8, xxxvii. 36. ——**This is the portion . . .**] A similar generalising statement in Judg. v. 31.

together the troops. Shabataka, at this time nominally king of Egypt, was really much more of an Ethiopian than an Egyptian prince:—he belongs indeed to the 25th or Ethiopian dynasty. Hence we can account for Isaiah's confining his prophecy to Ethiopia, which would be strange indeed had Egypt been united under a single native king. Isaiah evidently sympathises (as in the case of Merodach-Baladan; see on xxi. 1–10) with Ethiopia's hostility to the general enemy, Assyria, and salutes its people with honourable epithets, but he regards its anxiety as misplaced, for Jehovah is looking on, and will himself interpose at the right moment. Then, he predicts, will the distant lands, united under the sceptre of Ethiopia, recognise the divinity of Jehovah at 'the place of his Name' (comp. 1 Kings iii. 2) and the scene of the great deliverance—Jerusalem.—It is sometimes said that Tirhakah (Egyptian, *Taharaka*) is the name of the Ethiopian king referred to; comp. xxxvii. 9. This is against the Egyptian chronology, if Tirhakah reigned from 693 to 666 (Brugsch). We may either suppose the late compiler of xxxvi.–xxxix. to have confounded Shabataka with the better-known Tirhakah, or, with Lenormant, that Tirhakah acted as general against Sennacherib for his royal father.—Possibly Shabataka may have sent an embassy to Jerusalem; this will account for Isaiah's graphic description of the Ethiopians' appearance; only we must not, with Ewald, quote *v.* 2 in behalf of this theory, as the mention of the Nile-boats confines the scope of the messengers to Ethiopia.[1]

Against the view that the Jews are the nation referred to, which makes the whole prophecy unintelligible, see Delitzsch.

The prophecy falls into two symmetrical strophes, or paragraphs, each consisting of three verses of four lines or members each, and followed by an epilogue in one verse of five lines.

[1]Ah, land [a]of a clangour of wings,[a] which art beyond the rivers of Ethiopia, [2]which art sending heralds on the sea,

[a] So Ges., Del., Weir, Naeg.—Of overshadowing wings, Kay.—Of winged boats, Sept., Targ., Kimchi, Ew.

[1] **Ah!**] Here a cry of pity (Del.), or perhaps rather of sympathy with the anxiety of the Ethiopians.—**A clangour of wings**] A rhetorical synonym for the buzzing swarms of flies characteristic of Egypt and Nubia (Ex. viii. 21, 24), which are compared, as in vii. 18, to the hosts of enterprising Egyptian and Ethiopian warriors. Possibly Isaiah may refer to a particular fly commonly known as the tsetse, but among the Gallas as the *tsaltsal*, a name which closely resembles the Hebr. word for clangour. This would supply a peculiarly apt symbol for warriors, as it is the most dreaded of all the insects of the interior of Africa. Others have thought of the sacred beetle, so familiar a

[1] Schrader (*Die Keilinschriften, u. s. w.*, p. 267) places chap. xviii. shortly before the series of events which led to the battle of Raphia (see Smith, *History of Assyria*, p. 95). There is, however, nothing in the chapter itself to suggest this date; in particular, there is no allusion to negotiations between Egypt or Ethiopia and the small states of Palestine—negotiations which drew from Isaiah a by no means complimentary description of Egypt (xxx. 7, contrast xviii. 2). It is true, chap. xviii. is placed among prophecies of the reign of Sargon, but this is owing to its subject—the oracles on foreign nations being placed together.

and in vessels of papyrus on the face of the waters! Go, yè fleet messengers, to the nation [b]tall and [c]polished, to the people terrible ever since it arose, the [d]strong, strong[d] nation

[b] Strong, Ges.
[c] So Del., Weir, Naeg.—Beautiful, Stade.—Nimble, Ges., Ew.
[d] See below.

form in Egyptian symbolism, or of a kind of grasshopper or locust referred to under the name *tselâtsal* ('clangour') as peculiarly destructive to vegetation in Deut. xxviii. 42 (this has also been identified with the tsetse). Again, seeing that the Hebr. *tselâtsal* has also the meanings of cymbal and harpoon (= whizzing spear), we may, if we please, render the phrase 'winged cymbals' or 'winged spears' (in either case a fit name for the tsetses). It is the practice in Semitic to add a qualifying word like 'winged,' when a word may be understood in more than one sense (see e.g., xxxviii. 14, Gen. xxxvii. 31).——**Beyond the rivers of Ethiopia**] i.e., not only Seba or Meroe (Assyrian *Milukhkhi*), which is nearly surrounded by rivers, but the country farther to the south, which was under the Ethiopian rule (Del.). The prophet's object is to emphasize the greatness of Ethiopia, which has dominion over such distant countries. The *remoteness* of Ethiopia seems greatly to have impressed the Hebrew writers, in this early stage of geographical knowledge, see Ps. lxxii. 10, comp. 8 —There is a remarkable allusion to this passage in Zeph. iii. 10.

[2] **Heralds**] to the various districts of the empire.——**The sea**] i.e., the Nile (as xix. 5, Nah. iii. 8, see Pusey), still called el-Bahr 'the sea.' Comp. Sindhu 'the sea,' the Sanskr. name of the Indus.——**In vessels of papyrus**], such as are mentioned under another name in Job ix. 26, comp. Rawlinson's *Herodotus* (on ii. 96), where a picture of a papyrus-canoe is given. Pliny (*H. N.*, vi. 22) represents these ships as crossing the sea to the island of Taprobane (Ceylon), but is evidently misinformed.——**Go, ye fleet messengers**] The speaker may be either Isaiah or the king of Ethiopia, but most probably the former, in accordance with *v.* 3. The prophet leaves us to guess what he would have the messengers say. The king, their master, doubtless means them to give notice of the danger which threatens the empire, and to call together the available troops. Isaiah tacitly consents to the former part of their message, but not to the latter; for, the next verses assure us, Jehovah himself will interpose.——**To the nation tall and polished . . .**] Why this accumulation of minute features, instead of a simple mention of the name of the Ethiopians? There is perhaps a divine irony in the contrast between the immense preparations of this great and powerful people and the ease with which Jehovah, nullifying all human calculations, will extinguish the pride of Assyria in a single night (Del.). Isaiah, however, does not mean to be contemptuous. All ancient writers agree in their high opinion of the Ethiopians. Isaiah has probably met with ambassadors from Ethiopia in Jerusalem; hence his selection of physical details (comp. Herod. iii. 20, 114).——**Polished**] alluding to the appearance of the skin of the Ethiopians. See crit. note.——**The strong, strong nation and all-subduing**] Isaiah doubtless alludes to the Egyptian conquests of Shabaka, the first king of the 25th or Ethiopian dynasty of Manetho, and celebrated for his cruelty to the unfortunate Bokchoris (Egyptian *Bokenranf*). A tradition of the victories of the Ethiopians has been perptuated by Megasthenes (Strabo, xv. 1, 6), who couples Tearco (Tirhákah) with Sesostris.—The above

and all-subduing, whose land rivers [a]cut through.[a] [3]All ye inhabitants of the world and dwellers on the earth, when a signal is raised on the mountains, look ye; and when a trumpet is sounded, hear ye.

[4]For thus hath Jehovah said unto me, I will be still and look on in my mansion, [f]while there is[f] clear heat in sunshine, [f]while there are[f] clouds of dew in the harvest-heat. [5]For before the harvest, when the blossom is over, and the bud becometh a ripening grape, he shall cut off the branches with pruning-knives, and the shoots he heweth away. [6]They shall be left together to the birds of prey of the mountains, and to the beasts of the land, and the birds of prey shall summer upon them, and all the beasts of the land shall winter upon it. [7]At that time shall a present be brought unto Jehovah Sabáoth [g]from the[g] people tall and polished, and from the

[a] Despoil, Targ., Vulg., 4 Hebr. MSS., Vitr., Naeg.
[f] Like, Ew., Weir, Naeg.
[g] (Even) the, Hebr. text, Del., Naeg.

rend. is much disputed, but is far the most probable one. The only reasonable doubt relates to the first part of it. McGill and Del., for instance, objecting to an unnecessary ἅπαξ λεγόμενον, and to comparing the Arabic, render literally 'a nation of line-line and trampling,' i.e., 'a nation that takes possession of the territories of other nations and subjugates them' (McGill), or taking 'line' in the sense of command (?) as marking out the *line* of conduct, 'an imperious and victorious nation' (Del., Naeg.). But the reduplication of 'line' seems hardly called for on the former hypothesis, and the meaning given to 'line' by Del. is not sufficiently supported by the stammering speech of the drunkards in xxviii. 10.——**Rivers cut through**] Comp. Herod. ii. 108: κατετμήθη ἡ Αἴγυπτος (Böttcher). The modern Nubia abounds in rivers and mountain-torrents (comp. on *v.* 1). Canon Cook, rendering 'have spoiled,' sees an allusion to the neglect into which the dykes and reservoirs of Egypt had fallen (see on xix. 5). But the prophet is not speaking of Egypt, nor is he picturing a period of decline.

[3] Assyria is a *hostis humani generis*; therefore the whole world is invited to the spectacle of its overthrow.——**A signal**] This 'signal' is not to be understood as set up by the Ethiopians, on the watch against a sudden irruption of the Assyrians. It is a symbolical expression for the notice, supernaturally given, of the approach of the decisive moment. Comp. xi. 10, 12. For a verbal parallel, see xiii. 2.

[4] Explanatory. In the midst of all this excitement, of the Assyrians on the one hand, and of the Ethiopians on the other, Jehovah is calmly waiting till the fruit of Assyrian arrogance is all but ripe. Favouring circumstances are hastening the process (clear heat, etc.), and when perfection seems just within reach, Jehovah will interpose in judgment.——**Clear heat .... clouds of dew**) The conditions most favourable for the luxuriant growth of a vine (comp. *v.* 5).

[7] The effect upon Ethiopia. The text-reading is generally explained on the analogy of lxvi. 20, but is

people terrible ever since it arose, the strong, strong nation and all-subduing, whose land the rivers divide, to the place of the Name of Jehovah Sabáoth, mount Zion.

opposed by the parallel line. Nothing is here said of the conversion of the Ethiopians (contrast xix. 21, 22).——**The place of the Name**] Comp. 1 Kings viii. 17, and note on xxx. 27.

CHAPTER XIX.

THIS prophecy consists of two parts, *vv.* 1–15 describing the judgment impending over Egypt, *vv.* 16–25 the results of it. The first part falls into three stanzas or strophes, nearly equal in length; the second into five paragraphs, each beginning with 'In that day.' The first exhibits a prospect of unmingled gloom; the second admits Egypt, upon its conversion to the true religion, and Assyria, to equal privileges with Israel.

There are great difficulties in the right understanding of this oracle. Eichhorn actually denied the authorship to Isaiah altogether; and Ewald, who admits the authenticity, finds a general prolixity and an occasional peculiarity of expression which distinguish the discourse from the other writings of Isaiah. The points of contact with the prophet's acknowledged works are, however, sufficiently numerous (Gesenius, *Commentar*, p. 594), to justify our adherence to the traditional view, with more confidence, it is true, so far as *vv.* 1–15 are concerned, than with regard to the remainder. But it must still be left an open question whether a disciple of Isaiah has not given the prophecy its present form, working of course on the basis of Isaiah's notes.

The Egyptian and Assyrian Inscriptions have thrown great light on the historical references. (1) We have a proclamation of Piankhi Mer-Amon,[1] who in the eighth century B.C. (his precise date is uncertain), united under his sceptre the whole of Egypt and Ethiopia. It appears from this valuable state-paper that the whole of Lower Egypt was divided among rival princes, whose connection with their overlord was merely nominal. One of these, named Tafnekht, revolted, and made himself master of Lower Egypt. Piankhi, in the Inscription, recounts how he suppressed the revolt. Still the expression a 'hard lord' (*v.* 4) does not suit Piankhi, who enjoyed a character for clemency, which was only once stained by his conduct at Memphis (Inscr. line 96). The chief value of his Inscription is the evidence which it supplies of the imperfect centralisation of the government of Egypt, and of the civil wars which from time to time resulted. It is clear, however, that many of the petty princes remained in undisturbed possession of their fiefs, so that upon any serious disaster happening to the supreme power, the old evil of anarchy would

[1] See *Records of the Past*, ii. 79–104, and a series of articles by De Rougé and Lenormant, in the *Revue archéologique*, 1871–73. Also Canon Cook's *The Inscription of Pianchi Mer-Amon* (Lond. 1873).

at once show itself. (2) From inscriptions of Sargon (Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, pp. 125–6), we learn that in 720 B.C. he defeated Sibahki (the Egyptian king Shabaka), at the battle of Raphia. It is possible that Isa. xix. was written on the arrival of this news. Isaiah was doubtless sufficiently well acquainted with the previous history of Egypt to know that the loosening of the central authority meant the revival of the local chieftainships and incipient anarchy. He might also well suppose (for of course the 'spirit of prophecy' does not exclude natural means of knowledge), that Sargon would, either now or later, follow up his advantage, and display his natural 'hardness' or cruelty in the subjugation of Egypt. All that was revealed to him was that Egypt should be shaken to its centre; the precise time and instrument of this were hidden from him. As a matter of fact, the conquest of Egypt, at least of Upper Egypt,[1] was reserved for Esar-haddon in 672, who divided the country into twelve small tributary kingdoms. (3) It is not impossible that Isa. xix. may refer to this event (the conquest by Esar-haddon)—see Smith, *History of Assyria*, p. 135, *Assurbanipal*, pp. 15, 16. If so, it will fall into the old age of Isaiah, who would be about 90 (assuming 762 for his birth-year). We might also ascribe it to a disciple of Isaiah. Either supposition will account for the pale reflection which it gives of the grand Isaianic style.

The Isaianic authorship of *vv.* 16 (or 18)–25, is questioned. So much at least is self-evident, that they must have been written later than the rest of the chapter:—the prophecy is, from a literary point of view, complete without them, and the tone of prophecy and appendix is entirely different. Of course, Isaiah may have added these verses on a later revision of his works—and indeed we can hardly imagine a more 'swanlike end' for a dying prophet; or some later writer—it may be a disciple of Isaiah's—also in his degree as prophet may have been their author. We know, as a matter of fact, that prophecy becomes more minute, more circumstantial, the further we go from the age of Isaiah, so that it would not be an audacious conjecture that a prophet considerably more recent than Isaiah made this addition. Grätz suggests the author of the latter part of Zechariah (comp. Zech. xiv.), which on purely philological grounds must be separated from the former. Others (Ges., Hitz., Merx, Oort), seem to themselves to discover allusions to the age of the Maccabees, when Judæa was for the time independent, and when Egypt and Syria (here, according to them, called Assyria) were equally powerful. The time of the Maccabees, it is urged, also accounts for the prediction in *v.* 18, 'One shall be called Sun-city,' which was framed (*ex hypoth.*) in order to justify the erection of a temple at Leontopolis (in the nome of *Heliopolis*) by Onias IV., about 160 B.C.[2] The successes obtained soon afterwards by the Jews might, it is urged, encourage the formation of such extravagant hopes, and the friendly alliance between the three powers in

[1] Boscawen, *Transactions Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, iv. 86.

[2] Josephus (*Ant.*, xiii. 3. 1; *Wars*, vii. 10. 3) makes Onias appeal to the prediction in Isaiah of an Egyptian temple to be built to Jehovah, but without referring to the phrase 'city of the sun.'

v. 23, corresponds to the fact related in 1 Macc. x- 51–66 (see Hitzig's vigorous pleading, *Jesaja*, pp. 219, 220).

The verses are no doubt peculiar, but we have no right to ascribe them to the time of the Maccabees simply on the ground of the questionable reading *'Ir ha-khéres* 'Sun-city' and the questionable interpretation 'Asshur' = Syria (see on *vv.* 18–23). Knobel has already indicated points of contact between the disputed verses and the acknowledged prophecies of Isaiah; nor are the ideas radically inconsistent with those of Isaiah (comp. ii. 3, xvi. 12 (?), xviii. 7), though no equally 'catholic' passage can be referred to in his writings. One feature in the description, moreover, points decidedly to a time when the Deuteronomic laws were not known, or at any rate not observed, that of the *maççébah* or pillar unto Jehovah (see on *v.* 20). Note also that Assyria and Egypt are the powers hostile to Egypt in *vv.* 23–25, as in xi. 11–16.

[1] [Utterance of Egypt.] Behold, Jehovah rideth upon a swift cloud, and cometh to Egypt, and the not-gods of Egypt shall shake before him, and the heart of Egypt shall melt within it. [2] And I will [a]spur Egypt against Egypt, and they shall fight every one against his brother and every one against his fellow, city against city and kingdom against kingdom. [3] And the spirit of Egypt shall be made empty within it; and its counsel will I annihilate; and they shall resort to the not-gods, and to the mutterers, and to those who have familiar spirits, and to the wizards; [4] and I will shut up Egypt into the hand of a hard lord, and a fierce king shall rule over them —the oracle of the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth.

[5] And the waters shall dry up from the sea, and the River

[a] Arm, Ges., Ew.

1-17 Threatenings. Prophetic perfects in the Hebr.

[1] **Rideth upon a swift cloud**] Comp. Ps. xviii. 10: 'He rode upon a cherub, and did fly'—for the 'cherub' is a form of speech retained from myth-making times, and meaning the storm-cloud. Childlike language to childlike men.—— **The not-gods of Egypt . . .**] So Ex. xii. 12: 'And against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment.'

[2] **Egypt against Egypt**] One canton or one province of Egypt against another (see Introd.).

[3] **The mutterers**] Viz., of sacred formulæ; or perhaps it = ventriloquists, who imitated the voice of the shades. Comp. on viii. 19.—— **The wizards**] Magic was held in great honour in ancient Egypt, as the *Book of the Dead* shows. The standard work on the subject is by M. Chabas, *Le papyrus magique Harris* (1866). Comp. on *v.* 11.

[4] **A hard lord**] The description suggests a complete stranger to the culture of Egypt, i.e., an Assyrian rather than Ethiopian conqueror. Piankhi, moreover, was Egyptian by race (see Introd.).

[5] The drying up of the Nile, and the death of vegetation. The verse is taken, with slight alterations, from Job xiv. 11, where the special

become parched and dry; [6] and the rivers shall stagnate, the canals of Egypt shall become shallow and parched up, reeds and flags shall waste away. [7] The meadows by the Nile, by the shore of the Nile, and every seed-plot by the Nile, shall dry up and vanish away, and be no more. [8] And the fishers shall sigh, and all who cast hook into the Nile shall mourn, and those who spread nets on the face of the waters shall languish. [9] And those who prepare combed flax shall be ashamed, and those who weave white cloths. [10] And its pillars shall become broken in pieces, and all those who work for hire shall be grieved in soul.

reference to the Nile is dropped. ——**The sea**] i.e., the Nile (see on xviii. 2), or more strictly the Pelusiac stream (according to Sharpe, *History of Egypt*, i. 138). Canon Cook calls attention to the fact that great trouble was caused by the neglect of the dykes and reservoirs during periods of civil disorder (cf. Herod. ii. 137). 'The complete overthrow of the Ethiopian dynasty was naturally followed by a recurrence of the old evil, which was at length, after many years, arrested by the energetic measures of Psammetichus, described by Diod. Sic. i. 66' (Cook, *Inscription of Pianchi Mer-Amon*, p. 14). But of course this does not fully explain the very strong language of the prophecy.

[6] **The canals**] See Herod. ii. 108, and Sir G. Wilkinson's note *ad loc.* in Rawlinson.——**Egypt**] Hebr. *Maçor* (= Assyrian *Muçur*), an abnormal singular, of which *Miçraim* (Upper and Lower Egypt) is an abnormal dual. Same form in xxxvii. 25 (= 2 Kings xix. 24), Mic. vii. 12. It is not an Egyptian word, but one of its meanings in Hebr. is fortification. Hence Ebers thinks it originally meant Lower Egypt, which was protected by a wall across the isthmus of Suez, and that it was afterwards extended to Upper Egypt by the conquering Hyksos, when they found that Egypt was much larger in extent than the region protected by the wall (Ebers, *Aegypten*, i. 88). Brugsch, however, thinks Maçor meant originally the district of Zoan or Tanis, which occasionally bears the name in Egyptian (Semitised, I suppose) of *Ta mazor*, 'the fortified land' (*Gesch. Aegyptens*, 189).——**Flags**] Strictly 'papyrus'; Hebr. *sūph*, from *tufi* (Egyptian for papyrus, Brugsch).

[7] **The meadows**] Which were proverbial for luxuriant vegetation (comp. Gen. l. 11).——**Shore**] Lit. mouth. Comp. Gen. xli. 3, 'lip (i.e., shore) of the Nile.' A more complete parallel is wanting.——**Vanish away**] Lit. be chased away (like chaff, xvii. 13). A vivid word-picture of the re-assimilation of the narrow oasis of the Nile to the arid desert which hems it in.

[8] The fisherman's occupation is gone. Fish abounded in the Nile (Herod. ii. 93), and was much eaten (Num. xi. 5). To the priests, however, it was unclean on the ground of certain sacred legends (Pierret).

[9] **Who prepare combed flax**] Specially for the priests' clothing, and for the mummy-cloths. That the Egyptian byssus = flax was proved by the microscopic observations of Bauer (*Classical Museum*, vi. 152, &c.).——**White cloths**] Probably including cotton.

[10] All classes, high and low, are in consternation.——**The pillars**] Comp. Ezek. xxx. 4, Ps. xi. 3, Gal. ii. 9. (I doubt if the text of the second half of this verse is right.)

vv. 11–15 describe, not merely

[11] Utter fools are the princes of Zoan; the wisest counsellors of Pharaoh—senseless counsel! How can ye say unto Pharaoh, A son of the wise am I, a son of ancient kings? [12] Where are they, then, thy wise men? Let them, I pray, announce unto thee and let them know what Jehovah Sabáoth hath purposed upon Egypt. [13] Become foolish are the princes of Zoan, deceived are the princes of Noph; those have led Egypt astray who are the corner-stone of its tribes. [14] Jehovah hath mixed into it a spirit of perverseness, so that they have led Egypt astray in all his doing, as a drunken man strayeth about in his vomit. [15] Neither shall there be for Egypt any deed which the head and the tail might do, the palm-branch and the rush.

[16] In that day shall Egypt be like women, and shall

the perplexity of the Egyptian statesmen when the calamities have come, but the folly which accelerated their coming. ——**The princes**] i.e., the king and his priestly counsellors. 'Books containing magic formulæ belonged exclusively to the king; no one was permitted to consult them but the priests and wise men, who formed a council or college, and were called in by the Pharaoh on all occasions of difficulty.' Canon Cook (note on Ex. vii. 11).——**Zoan**] The 'great city' of the Delta, called Tanis by the Greeks. Here, according to Brugsch, the great Rameses fixed his capital, whence the name 'Pi-ramessu,' city of Rameses (*Geschichte Ægyptens*, pp. 546–7). ——**How can ye say unto Pharaoh . . .**] 'With what reason can you boast, as you do, of belonging to a royal class' (the Pharaohs belonging to the priestly class, either by birth or by adoption)?

[12] The first proof of the 'folly' of the wise men. They cannot predict the nature or the course of events in this ominous period. There was no distinction between priests and prophets in Egypt. It is true that Egyptologists mention a special office of prophecy, but the sense in which they use the term is peculiar. (Mr. Bonwick, *Egyptian Belief and Modern Thought*, p. 353, seems to have been misled by this.)

[13] A second proof. They had led Egypt astray, by their infatuated conduct of affairs.——**Noph**] Either Memphis (as most, after LXX.), called in the Inscriptions Men-nufr, or 'the good abode,' or Napata, the Nap of the Inscriptions, the residency of the Ethiopian dynasty (De Rougé, *Revue archéol.*, n. s., viii. 127).——**The corner-stone**] Applied collectively to the whole priestly class. Comp. Zech. x. 4, Judg. xx. 2, 1 Sam. xiv. 38. The Egyptian word *kenbet* is applied in the same way (Mr. Renouf, *Academy*, Jan. 9, 1875).——**Tribes**] i.e., castes, or rather classes.

[14] The origin of this strange confusion is traced to Jehovah.——**Mixed**] i.e., poured out a drink of mixed ingredients.——**A spirit of perverseness**] Or, of subversion. The opposite of a 'firm spirit,' Ps. li. 10 (12). Comp. on xxxvii. 7.

[15] The verse is slightly obscure. It either says that neither high nor low will be able to effect anything (taking 'and' = or), or, which better suits 'for Egypt,' that the general disunion will prevent any truly national enterprise (taking 'and' = with, as vii. 1). For the figure, **head and tail**, &c., see on ix. 14.

[16] **In that day**] On the arrival

tremble and shudder, because of the swinging of the hand of Jehovah Sabáoth, which he swingeth against it. [17] And the land of Judah shall become a terror unto Egypt: whosoever [b]maketh mention of it, unto him they turn shudderingly,[b] because of the purpose of Jehovah Sabáoth, which he purposeth against it (Egypt). [18] In that day there shall be five cities in the land of Egypt, speaking the tongue of Canaan, and swearing

[b] (Lit. . . . he shuddereth.)—Mentioneth it unto him, he shuddereth, Ges., Del.—Recalleth it to mind, shuddereth, Ew.

of the foe?——**The swinging . . .**] See on XXX. 32.

[17] **The land of Judah shall become a terror**] Why? Because it is Jehovah's seat of empire.

[18-25] Promises. The grand subject of this epilogue (with which comp. xxiii. 15–18) is the turn in the fortunes of Egypt consequent upon its submission to Jehovah (so Jer. xlvi. 26). The transition is abrupt; we have passed at a bound into the Messianic period. The abruptness might perhaps be an argument against the Isaianic authorship of these verses, were it not (1) for the prophetic custom of representing the final ἀποκατάστασις or 'restitution' as following immediately upon the then existing crisis, and (2) for Isaiah's fondness for painting a cheerful background to his gloomiest descriptions.—The prediction was not altogether devoid even of human verisimilitude. Egyptian inscriptions prove that the population of Lower Egypt near the frontier was at least half Semitic (i.e., Canaanitish), and that its idioms, manners, and modes of thought largely influenced those of the pure Egyptians. The linguistic influence of Canaan seems to have been specially strong during the period of the 18th and 19th dynasties. Certain texts of this age, e.g., those of the Anastasi papyrus (No. 4), are half made up of Semitic words in an Egyptian dress; they show that Egypt was then passing through a regular Semito-mania. Nor can the influences of Canaan have been linguistic only. We know from Jeremiah (xliv. 1) that many Jews found refuge in Lower Egypt after the fall of Jerusalem, and it is a mere accident that we have no earlier notice of similar displacements caused by the Assyrian invasions One of the towns mentioned by Jeremiah as the seat of a Jewish colony is Migdol, and it appears that this pure Hebrew name had been selected by the Egyptians themselves under the form of Maktal. M. de Rougé and others have also called attention to the Semitic names (Tiglath, Namrutu, Nabonesa, &c.) of princes of the Bubastite dynasty. This points to a close connection of this line of kings with Assyria, but hardly illustrates our present point. One of the names, however, in the Inscription of Pianchi, viz., Zadkhiau, is apparently the Egyptian form of Zedekiah (so Cook). Comp. De Rougé, *Revue archéol.* viii. 127, &c.; Brugsch, *Histoire d'Égypte*, 2^me^ éd., chap. xi.; Maspero, *Rev. arch.*, 1878, p. 168, *Histoire ancienne*, prem. éd., p. 338.

[18] **Five cities in the land of Egypt . . .**] Is this to be taken literally? Vitringa and Hitzig think so. But it would be strange if a prophecy which begins with such an absence of prosaically minute predictions (comp. Naeg. on *vv.* 2–4) should close with such remarkably circumstantial anticipations. If, therefore, *v.* 18 is to be taken literally, we shall have to accept the theory that the passage (and all belonging to it) is a later addition. It is well known, how-

to Jehovah Sabáoth; one shall be named City of destruction.
[19] In that day there shall be an altar to Jehovah in the midst

ever, that five, the half of ten, was a favourite round number both with the Egyptians (see Ebers on Gen. xliii. 34), and with the Jews (xxx. 17, xvii. 6, Lev. xxvi. 8, 1 Cor. xiv. 19). The prophet may therefore only mean that there shall be a number, just large enough to be appreciable, of Egyptian civic communities (not merely Hebrew colonies, as Lenormant, see end of verse), **speaking the tongue of Canaan** (i.e., Hebrew, see on xxxvi. 11). These latter words probably mean that Hebrew shall become the language of sacred forms and ceremonies in these 'five cities,' which of course would be the natural result of their conversion to Jehovah (comp. Zech. xiv. 9). Granting, therefore, that the expectation of conversions on a large scale to the true religion is in harmony with the rest of the acknowledged prophecies of Isaiah, there is nothing in the form of this verse to preclude its Isaianic origin.—— **Swearing to Jehovah Sabáoth**] Not 'swearing by' (as lxv. 16), but 'swearing (fidelity) to' (as xlv. 23). —— **One shall be named**] A phrase which constantly introduces a title descriptive of character; see i. 26, iv. 3, lx. 14, lxii. 4. If, however, we read the following words, 'City of the sun,' this cannot be its intention here; we must take it as simply equivalent to 'shall be.' But where is there an analogy for this? —— **City of destruction**] There is great doubt whether the reading should be *'Ir ha-héres* (adopted here), or *'Ir ha-khéres* 'City of the sun.' The main objection to the latter is that it is not at all suitable for a honorific title conferred by a Jewish prophet. An Assyrian might have written thus (comp. *Records of the Past*, ix. 24), but not a Jewish prophet. The attempts that have been made to provide a better meaning for *'Ir ha-khéres* are extremely rash. — The text-reading has been well explained by Targ., which has 'the city of Bethshemesh (= the house of the sun) which is to be laid waste.' In other words, the prophet intends Heliopolis, but modifies the form of the first letter to indicate the pious zeal for the religion of Jehovah which shall one day inspire its *Egyptian* inhabitants. It is as if he would say, No longer 'city of the false god of the sun,' but 'city of the breaking down of idolatrous altars.' (It is the word used for Gideon's breaking down of the altar of Baal, Judg. vi. 25). Comp. Jer. xliii. 13, 'He shall break the (idolatrous) pillars of the house of the sun,' i.e., the temple in Heliopolis. A similar allusive transformation of the native Egyptian name An (pronounced by the Jews On), is made by Ezekiel (xxx. 17), 'The young men of Aven (= 'nothingness,' or 'wickedness') shall fall by the sword.' So Secker (*ap.* Lowth), Caspari, Herzfeld, Drechsler, Del.

[19] A further development of *v.* 18. The 'five cities' shall erect an altar to Jehovah. It is not quite certain how this is to be understood. It depends on our decision of certain preliminary questions. If Isaiah wrote these verses, and if Deuteronomy was written after his time, the altar *may* have been intended as an altar of sacrifice, in accordance with the primitive law in Ex. xx. 24 (*Q. P. B.*). If, however, these verses were written after the composition of Deuteronomy (whether Mosaic or not), then we must suppose that the altar was merely an 'altar of witness,' on the principle set forth in Josh. xxii. 23, 24. Or again, the description may be purely symbolical. For this we have a striking analogy in Mal. i. 11, which describes how 'in every place' among the Gentiles 'incense is offered unto the name of Jehovah, and a pure meal-offering,'

of the land of Egypt, and a pillar by its border to Jehovah; [20] and it shall be for a sign and a witness to Jehovah Sabáoth in the land of Egypt: when they shall cry unto Jehovah because of oppressors, he shall send them a deliverer and an advocate, and shall rescue them. [21] And Jehovah shall make himself known to Egypt, and the Egyptians shall know Jehovah in that day, and shall serve with sacrifice and offering, and shall vow a vow unto Jehovah, and shall perform it. [22] And Jehovah shall smite Egypt, smiting and healing; and when they return unto Jehovah, he shall receive their supplications, and shall heal them. [23] In that day there shall be a highway from Egypt to Assyria; Assyria shall come into Egypt, and Egypt into Assyria, and the Egyptians shall

where the symbolical meaning is indicated by the context.——**And a pillar by its border**] In primitive times a pillar (Heb. *maççébah*), was the distinguishing mark of a holy place. Idolatrous pillars were commanded to be destroyed (Ex. xxiii. 24), but most critics think that 'pillars' to Jehovah were quite allowable till the time of Hezekiah or Josiah, to which they assign the Book of Deuteronomy (comp. Deut. xvi. 21, 22). At any rate, the prophet gives an implicit sanction to the erection of a sacred pillar in Egypt. 'By its border,' to indicate that the whole land belonged to Jehovah.

[20] The altar and obelisk are a sign and a witness to God as well as to man, viz., of the covenant now existing between Jehovah and his sworn servants (*v.* 18), the Egyptians. Hence, if some great or petty king should again attempt to 'oppress' Egypt, Jehovah will send a 'deliverer,' as he does to his ancient people (same word in Judg. iii. 9, 15, iv. 3, Obad. 21).

[21] **And Jehovah shall make himself known . . .**] Especially by answering their prayers (*v.* 20). They on their side recognise him for their God by offering sacrifice—whether on the altar mentioned in *v.* 20, or at Jerusalem, is not stated, but the latter is suggested by the parallel passage, Zech. xiv. 16–19. Obs., the 'five cities' have here expanded into 'the Egyptians.' Possibly the former were the 'remnant' which survived God's terrible visitation, and was to become the 'seed' of a regenerate nation (comp. vi. 13).

[22] The prophet returns to the period of calamity which is to precede the conversion of the Egyptians. Egypt shall be smitten, but with a view to its being healed. For the antithesis, comp. Deut. xxxii. 39, Hos. vi. 1, Job v. 18, and for the important idea thus expressed, Zeph. iii. 8, 9, Jer. xii. 15–17.

[23] The first consequence of this wonderful conversion is the cessation of war between the once rival countries of Egypt and Assyria. The mention of Assyria confirms the view that the 'hard lord' is an Assyrian king.—Of course, this prophecy presupposes that the Assyrians have also been converted (see on x. 20), and one cannot help regretting that no more distinct revelation on this subject is still extant.——**A highway**] i.e., an uninterrupted passage through Palestine. —— **The Egyptians shall serve with the Assyrians**] The sense of the word rendered 'serve' is clear from *v.* 21. No Israelite could misunderstand the

serve with the Assyrians. [24] In that day shall Israel be a third to Egypt and to Assyria, even a blessing within the earth, [25] [c]forasmuch as[c] Jehovah Sabáoth hath blessed him, saying, Blessed is my people Egypt, and the work of my hands Assyria, and mine inheritance Israel.

[c] Wherewith, Ew.

phrase any more than the term 'knowledge' for 'knowledge of Jehovah' in Hos. iv. 6. To render, therefore, with Hitzig, 'Egypt shall (resign itself to) serve Assyria' (or, as he explains it, Syria), is arbitrary, though LXX., Targ., Pesh., Vulg., thoughtlessly give this rendering. How could there be an empire, whose head in political matters was Assyria, and in religious Judæa? A strange retrogression of the Messianic belief!—Hitz's. explanation of Asshur as = Syria is without authority. No doubt Asshur could be and was used of a power which succeeded to the place of Assyria, such as Persia (see Ezra vi. 22), but not of an inferior power, such as Syria. In Ps. lxxxiii. 8 (9) Assyria cannot = Syria, because it is only mentioned in the second degree of Israel's enemies ('Assyria *also*,' are the Psalmist's words). Lagarde, moreover, would there read, not Asshur, but Geshur.

[24] But a third factor is still wanting to complete the harmony, viz., Israel. These three, Egypt, Assyria, Israel, have been divinely prepared to become **a blessing within the earth** ('within,' i.e., 'within the entire compass of,' not merely 'in the midst of'—blessing is to stream forth from them in all directions, comp. Gen. xii. 2*b*, 3*b*).

[25] **Hath blessed him**] viz., each of the three countries. Obs. Israel, as the central point of 'blessing,' still retains a certain preeminence. He is Jehovah's 'inheritance'—the phrase does not occur again till the second part of Isaiah (xlvii. 6, lxiii. 17), as Dr. Weir points out.

CHAPTER XX.

ISAIAH, in the habit of a captive, a sign for Egypt and Palestine.

The renascence of Egyptian prosperity under Shabaka (the So, or rather Seve, of 2 Kings xvii. 4) was but of short duration. The disastrous battle of Raphia (B.C. 720) not only compelled 'Rahab,' the Insolent One, to acknowledge the supremacy of Assyria, but again destroyed the dream of Egyptian unity. Tanis, Bubaste, Khnensa, and Sais, each became the residence of a petty king; Shabataka, the son of Shabaka, was forced to content himself with Thebes and the 'nomes' in its immediate vicinity.[1]

It was not likely that so disunited a country could be of any real use to Judah. And yet it appears from this chapter, compared with chaps. xxx., xxxi., that negotiations were actually entered into between the courts of Palestine (especially that of Judah) and those of Egypt. The danger from Assyria must indeed have been urgent to have suggested so precarious an auxiliary, and Isaiah, whose faith in Jehovah kept him free from

[1] Maspero, *Histoire ancienne de l'Orient*, prem. éd., p. 398.

all political illusions, lost no opportunity of counteracting such a policy. The special occasion of the prophecy in chap. xx. is revealed to us by the Assyrian inscriptions. Two different texts relate to the siege of Ashdod here so briefly referred to: according to one, it happened in the ninth year of the reign of Sargon, i.e., B.C. 711; according to another, in the eleventh, i.e., B.C. 709. It is certain, however, that the siege was the consequence of a change of political parties in the town of Ashdod. A temporary advantage had been given to the Assyrian party by the interference of Sargon who, some time after the battle of Raphia, deposed the rightful king Azuri, on a charge of rebellion, and enthroned his brother Akhimit in his place. The ruling class, however, were predominantly anti-Assyrian, and deposed Akhimit, setting up one Yavan as king. The consequence was the siege of Ashdod referred to by Isaiah, which ended in the deportation of the inhabitants to Assyria.—The same cylinder-inscription which relates the siege of Ashdod gives a list of the nations which incurred the same guilt of treason, and among them appears the name of Judah (see on *v.* 6).

Thus Isaiah had good reason, on political as well as religious grounds, to dehort the Jews from an Egyptian alliance. His ill success was revenged by the invasion and subjugation of Judah, to which I have referred in the introduction to x. 5-xii. The conquest of Egypt, however, which Isaiah here holds out in prospect, did not immediately take place. The war with Merodach-Baladan, king of Babylon, prevented Sargon from invading Egypt, and the nominal king of Egypt and Ethiopia (Shabataka), sent an embassy to Sargon desiring peace.[1]

It seems to me very doubtful whether *vv.* 1, 2 can have been written by Isaiah, as *v.* 1 implies a confusion of two distinct sieges of Ashdod. The former reminds us strongly of chap. vii. Both chapters have probably been worked up on the basis of notes of Isaiah's prophecies, and some historical traditions of the life and acts of Isaiah.

[1] In the year when the Tartan came to Ashdod, when Sargon king of Assyria sent him (he warred against Ashdod

[1] **The Tartan**] The official designation of the general-in-chief of the Assyrian army; properly Turtanu, a word adopted from the non-Semitic Accadian. He was the second personage in the empire, the constitution of Assyria being essentially military. There is, therefore, no reason to identify this Tartan with the one in 2 Kings xviii. 17.——**Sargon**] This Sargon was called Sargon the Later, to distinguish him from another king (Sargina) who reigned in Babylonia several centuries earlier. The name is properly, Accadian, and therefore non-Semitic, but the Assyrians, who Semitised it into Sarru-kinu, may have given it the meaning, 'The (heavenly) King (is) established, or, faithful'—a religious name like the Heb. Malchiram 'The King (is) lofty.' (**He warred against Ashdod** . . .) Told by anticipation, comp. the parenth. in vii. 1. The command to Isaiah was of course prior to the capture. This passage supplements Sargon's own account of the siege, for this king, in accordance with the Assyrian

[1] Menant, *Annales des rois d'Assyrie*, p. 186; Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 267.

and took it), [2] at that time spoke Jehovah by Isaiah son of Amoz, saying, Go and loose the sackcloth from off thy loins, and take thy shoe from off thy foot: and he did so, going naked and barefoot. [3] And Jehovah said, According as my servant Isaiah hath gone naked and barefoot [a]three years for a sign[a] and an omen against Egypt and against Ethiopia, [4] so

[a] For three years a sign, Sept., Vulg., Hebr. accents, Luzzatto, Del., Kay.

custom, takes the credit of the capture of Ashdod to himself.

[2] **The sackcloth**] He means the haircloth which the prophets, like the later Christian ascetics, adopted as their habitual dress. Comp. 2 Kings i. 8, Zech. xiii. 4. The phrase 'to gird sackcloth' implies that it was worn as an outer garment. 'Naked' means without this outer garment, 1 Sam. xix. 24, Am. ii. 16, Mic. i. 8, John xxi. 7. On the practical impressiveness of such an act in Jerusalem, see Sir E. Strachey's excellent remarks, *Hebrew Politics*, p. 114.

[3] The act is symbolic—the only *recorded* instance of the sort (as chap. vi. is the only recorded vision) in the works of Isaiah. Two difficulties have to be resolved. First, as to the historical character of the act related here. Some (e.g., Kuenen, *Onderzoek*, ii. 76) think that it is not historical, but an imaginative embodiment of the idea of captivity, and take the same view of the similar episodes in Hosea, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel. But we ought rather to consider each case separately; and there is, I think, a special inappropriateness in ascribing such a procedure to a prophet like the 'royal' Isaiah. The second difficulty relates to the duration of the sign. Some critics, ancient as well as modern, have found it difficult to believe that so strange a spectacle should have been exhibited for three whole years. Hence, according to some (but see xxix. 10 Heb.), the Massorites have put a stop (Athnakh) after the word for 'barefoot,' in order to make the second part of the verse run 'for three years a sign.' Vitr. (doubtfully), Del., Kay, and Stade adopt this view, and Vitr. further conjectures virtually that the text originally ran thus, 'As my servant Isaiah hath gone naked and barefoot *three days*, for three years a sign,' &c., which he supports by the observation that τρία ἔτη is twice expressed in the Sept. This latter view (approved by Lowth) is at any rate better than the supposition that Isaiah performed the symbolic act only once; a single act of this kind would have been at most a ten days' wonder. The difficulty is entirely caused by a preconceived notion as to what was proper conduct for Isaiah. Apart from this, no one would have entertained a doubt that 'three years' belongs naturally to 'hath gone' and not to 'a sign.'—A greater difficulty than that of the 'propriety' or 'impropriety' of a three years' 'sign' of this kind arises from the Annals of Sargon, which show that the (final) siege of Ashdod lasted only a part of a year (see Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, p. 129). The true solution, I think, is that the three years are to be counted from the rebellion of Azuri (see Introd.). There were, in fact, two sieges of Ashdod, one issuing in the deposition of Azuri, the other in the captivity of the whole people of Ashdod, and these are fused together in the compendious statement of *v.* 1.——**And Jehovah said**] i.e., at the end of the three years.

[4] The meaning of the sign—the shameful captivity of Egypt and Ethiopia.

[5, 6] The application. The ful-

shall the king of Assyria lead the captives of Egypt and the exiles of Ethiopia, young men and old, naked and barefoot and with buttocks uncovered, a shame for Egypt. [8] And men shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Ethiopia their expectation and Egypt their ornament. [6] And the inhabitants of this [b] region shall say in that day, Behold, thus hath it gone with our expectation, whither we fled for help to get deliverance from the king of Assyria; and how shall *we* escape?

[b] Coast-land, Ew., Del., Weir, Naeg.

filment of the sign will radically cure the men of Palestine of their inveterate confidence in Egypt.—— **This region**] The reference is disputed. Chwolson, rendering 'yonder island,' thinks of Cyprus (comp. Jer. xxv. 22), which submitted to Sargon in his eleventh campaign, see *Jüd. Zeitschr.*, 1872, p. 306; Knob., rendering 'this sea-coast,' of Phœnicia (xxiii. 2, 6) and Philistia (Zeph. ii. 5); Hitzig, of Philistia only. The two latter have seen half the truth, but only half, for Judah cannot be excluded, comp. xxx. 3. It seems to me that all the small populations of Palestine are intended, which, in the hope of Egyptian assistance, had revolted or were conspiring to revolt from Assyria. Comp. Sargon's statement, that 'the people of Philistia, Judah, Edom, and Moab, dwelling [who dwell] beside the sea, bringing [who bring] tribute and presents to Assur my lord, were speaking treason' (Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, p. 130). To those who adopt the rendering 'this sea-coast' the parallel expression used by Sargon ought to have special force. Comp. Ewald, *History*, i. 215.

CHAPTER XXI.

VERSES 1–10. The fall of Babylon; the 'visions' which announced it, and its effect upon Isaiah.—Very many modern critics have dated this prophecy in the Babylonian exile. In favour of this view, it may be urged that the prophet writes in the style and with the fervour of a contemporary. Notice, however, 1. the touch of depression with which the prophet announces his tidings (*vv.* 3, 4, 10); 2. the form of the second part of the prophecy, which seems to presuppose distance from Babylon; and 3. that both ideas and phraseology are in harmony with the authorship of Isaiah: compare *v.* 1 with xxx. 6; *v.* 2 with xxxiii. 1; *v.* 5 (Hebr.) with xxii. 13 (Hebr.); *v.* 6 with viii. 11, xviii. 4, xxi. 16, xxxi. 4; (*rékeb*) *vv.* 7, 9, with xxii. 6; *v.* 10 with xxviii. 28 and 22. It is clear that what is wanted to settle the question is a siege of Babylon in the lifetime of Isaiah, and, strange to say, Assyrian researches have revealed no less than three such sieges, viz., in 709 by Sargon, and in 703 and 691 by Sennacherib[1] (see Smith's *Assyria*, pp. 107, 110, 123). The king of

[1] The circumstances of the latter of these sieges agree even better with the prophet's description than those of the siege by Sargon (see Smith, as above). The objection to regarding this siege (or that in 703) as the subject of the prophecy is that the Elamites

Babylon during the first two of these sieges was Merodach-Baladan, who as we know from xxxix. 1 (= 2 Kings xx. 12) sent an embassy to Hezekiah. His immediate interests, in fact, were identical with those of Hezekiah, with whom he probably desired to form an alliance, and who responded to his wishes so far at least as to exhibit all his treasures and his armour. We can now understand the depression with which Isaiah announces his revelation. Although he recognised, as a prophet, the divine necessity of Babylon's fall, he must, at any rate, have known, and have grieved from a human point of view to know, that it was an event of evil omen for still weaker kingdoms. It is true, the king of Elam was at this time not unfavourably disposed to Merodach-Baladan, which is at first sight inconsistent with the summons, 'Go up, O Elam' (*v.* 2). But we may reply 1. that Isaiah need not have been minutely acquainted with the shifting political relations of Elam and her neighbours; 2. that as a matter of fact the Elamites were not all either able or willing to support their king in the line he wished to adopt (see *Records of the Past*, vii. 44, 45); and 3. that part of Elam appears to have been annexed to Assyria by Sargon in 721 (*Records*, vii. 29).[1]

[1] [Utterance of the wilderness of the sea.] As tempests in the southland sweeping along, it cometh from the wilderness, from a terrible land. [2] A hard vision is announced unto me: 'The barbarous dealer dealeth barbarously, and the

[1] **Utterance...**] An enigmatical title, reminding us of the titles of prophecies in *v.* 11, xxii. 1, xxx. 6. It is self-evident that the word 'wilderness' comes from *v.* 1; it was a custom of the later Jews to form titles out of the opening words of a section or book, or out of some leading words in the sequel (comp. *v.* 13, xxii. 1, and the titles of the Books of the Pentateuch, Proverbs, and Lamentations). 'The sea' appears to be a synonym for the Euphrates, as in xviii. 2, xix. 5, for the Nile. If so, the author of the title (a later editor) misunderstood *v.* 2 (see note), perhaps through thinking of xliv. 27, Jer. li. 42, 43. The Septuagint, however, omits 'of the sea.'——**In the southland**] i.e., in the south of Judah, called by the special topographical name *Negeb*, 'dry country.' For these 'tempests,' see Zech. ix. 14, Job xxxvii. 9, i. 19, Hos. xiii. 15, Jer. iv. 11, xiii. 24, and comp. Major Palmer's *Sinai*, p. 33.——**It cometh from the wilderness**] Babylonia was bordered on the S.-W. by the Arabian desert (see Del.'s note). We have no occasion, however, to look out anxiously for a literal historical fulfilment. It is a grand poetical symbol which we have before us.——**Terrible land**] Comp. xxx. 6, Deut. viii. 15.

[2] **Hard**] i.e., calamitous, as 1 Kings xiv. 6.——**Vision**] i.e., revelation.——**The barbarous dealer**] i.e., the Assyrian army. The Hebr. *bōgēd* is strictly one who deals faithlessly; then, one who has no

(who were now in alliance with the Babylonians) had been in a state of revolt from Assyria from the very accession of Sennacherib. We can hardly imagine that this was unknown to Isaiah; in fact, there was a presumption against any of the tributary nations persisting in their allegiance when the murder of Sargon had given the signal for revolt.

[1] In the above views I mainly follow Dr. Paul Kleinert, *Theolog. Studien und Kritiken*, 1877, pp. 174–9.

waster wasteth. Go up, Elam! Besiege, Media! All the sighing (?) thereof will I still.' [3] Therefore my loins are filled with anguish; pangs have taken hold of me, like the pangs of a woman in travail: I writhe so that I cannot hear; I am alarmed so that I cannot see. [4] My heart beateth; terror hath frighted me; the evening of my pleasure he hath turned for me into trembling. [5] Preparing the table! [a]spreading the coverlet (?)[a]! eating, drinking! 'Arise, ye princes, anoint the shield.'

[6] For thus hath the Lord said unto me: 'Go, place a watchman; what he shall see, he shall announce.' [7] And [b] he saw a troop of horsemen by pairs, a troop (of riders) on asses,

[a] So Hitz.—Watching the watch, Del., Naeg.—Setting (?) the watch, Kay.—Taking a horoscope (? ?), Ew.

regard for the law of humanity—a barbarous conqueror. —— **Elam**] Obs. the Elamites are spoken of as a still existing people. Consequently, this prophecy must have been written before the Exile, for the exile-prophet Ezekiel speaks of Elam as of an extinct nation in company with Asshur, xxxii. 24, comp. Jer. xlix. 34, &c. The Elamites had been made tributary by Sargon in 721 (*Records of the Past*, vii. 29, comp. 41).——**Sighing**] The 'sighing' caused by Babylon? But Babylon is not here referred to as a tyrant-city. Surely the word is corrupt (Kleinert); we expect something like 'arrogance' (comp. xiii. 11)—arrogance, namely, towards Jehovah.

[2. 4] Such terrible tidings overpower the prophet. He thinks, perhaps, of his own city, and of the fate in store for it (xxxii. 13, 14). ——**My loins**] The loins as the seat of the sharpest pain, Nah. ii. 10, Ezek. xxi. 6.——**The evening of my pleasure**] i.e., in which I take pleasure, either as the time of repose, or (Kleinert) of visionary communications from on high.

[5] **Preparing the table . . .**] Historical infinitives, vividly depicting the arrogant security of the Babylonians. The revel is interrupted by the announcement that the walls have been stormed, and that the palace itself is in danger. ——**Spreading the coverlet**] i.e., either the cloth on which the viands are set, or the coverings of the seats of the banqueters. This rend. suits the context best, and accounts best for the article, but is far from certain.——**Anoint the shield**] They had not even prepared their shields for battle—so confident were they! The 'anointing' was mainly in order that the weapons of the enemy might glide off them.

[6-9] Explanatory of *vv.* 2–5. Isaiah feigns that he has been directed by Jehovah to set a watchman, but the watchman is really himself. The prophet, as Ewald points out, has, as it were, a double personality. He is at once a 'watchman,' intent upon every indication of the Divine will, and the spokesman or herald of revelation. Here Isaiah wishes to make it clear that it was no political calculation of his own, but a warning from above, which gave him the certitude of Babylon's fall. Hence his fiction. Hab. ii. 1 is closely parallel.—It is surely much more easy to understand the passage about the 'watchman,' if written at Jerusalem, than as the work of an exile in Babylon.—— **Unto me**] Added for emphasis, as in *v.* 16 (*Isaiah's*), viii. 11, xxxi. 4.

[7] **Asses . . . camels**] The com-

a troop on camels; and he hearkened[b] very diligently. [8] And he cried (as) a lion, 'O Lord, I stand upon the watchtower continually by day, and I remain at my post all the nights.' [9] And behold, there came a troop of men, of horsemen by pairs; and he answered and said, 'Fallen, fallen is Babylon, and all the images of its gods he hath broken unto the ground!' [10] O my threshed and winnowed one! that which I have heard (coming) from Jehovah Sabáoth, the God of Israel, have I announced unto you.

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vv. 11, 12. A short, vague, and difficult prophecy. Is it a poetic image that a call comes to Isaiah from Seir? or did the Edomites really consult the prophet of Jehovah, as Ahaziah consulted Baalzebub, the god of Ekron? or have some words fallen out of the text which would have made the applicants Jewish fugitives in Seir? The first seems to me the right view. It is 'in the spirit' that Isaiah hears the question of the Edomites. The prophecy belongs probably to the reign of Sargon, by

[b] Should he see &c., he shall hearken, Ew., Kay.

mentators here quote Herod. i. 80, iv. 129, vii. 86, to show that some of the soldiers in the Persian army rode on asses or camels. But asses and camels are expressly mentioned as left on the field of battle by Merodach-Baladan (Bellino cylinder, *ap.* Schrader, *K. A. T.*, pp. 219, 220), and we may presume that they were sometimes employed in the Assyrian army.——**He hearkened**] viz., for a Divine revelation. The prophet knows that the king of Assyria has taken the field against various rebellious peoples, but for some time his inner ear catches no tidings affecting the interests of Judah. Hence, the imaginary watchman **cried (as) a lion** (*v.* 8), 'with a deep groan of impatience.' His cry is addressed to Jehovah ('O Lord'); thus we have a key to the allegoric fiction. The prophet is the watchman, and he is set by Jehovah (Ezek. xxxiii. 7).

[9] **And behold . . .**] Just as the watchman had uttered his complaint, the answer came. He saw a troop of men riding, in pairs, and coming from Babylon. Then all at once it dawns upon him with prophetic certitude that Babylon has fallen. As a prophet of Jehovah, he cannot but rejoice at the signal blow thus inflicted on idolatry, but at the same time he recognises, as a citizen, the pain which the news must give to his own people.

[10] **O my threshed . . .**] 'O Israel, who hast lately suffered so much from the cruel Assyrian invaders (under Sargon, see on x. 5, &c.)! How gladly would I have brought thee more cheering tidings, news of the success of the rebellions against Assyria, but I can but wait upon my office. That which I have heard . . . I have announced unto you.' The prophet clearly implies that there is more trouble in store for his country from Assyria. But he suggests the only trustworthy source of comfort—viz. that He who doeth all this is 'the God of Israel.'——**Threshed** (or, trodden) **and winnowed one** (lit., son of my floor)] So of the later kingdom of Babylon, Jer. li. 33. It must be remembered that threshing was performed either by oxen treading out with the feet (so Hos. x. 11), or with iron wains (xxviii. 28, xli. 15, Am. i. 3, Mic. iv. 12).

whom (see on chap. xx.) Judah and Edom are brought under a common accusation of seditious plotting. In Sennacherib's time the Edomites paid tribute to Assyria.

11 [Utterance of Dumah.] Unto me [c]calleth one[c] out of Seir: 'Watchman! what part of the night? Watchman! what part of the night?' 12 The watchman said, Morning cometh, and also night. If ye would inquire, inquire; return, come.

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vv. 13–17. This prophecy must have been written rather later than the foregoing. War had already reached the powerful tribe of the Dedanites. Within a year, says the prophet, the other tribes of Arabia should share the same fate. 'Both Sargon and Sennacherib have recorded the subjection of Arabian tribes on the Assyrian monuments' (*I. C. A.*, p. 49).

13 [Utterance [d]'in the evening.'[d]] In the thickets must ye lodge [d]in the evening,[d] ye caravans of Dedanites. 14 To the

[c] The fugitives call, Sept. (virtually), Dozy, Grätz.
[d] So Sept., Targ., Pesh., Vulg., Lowth.—In (or, on) Arabia. Vowel-points, Ew., Kay, (Del. and Naeg. the first time only).

11 **Utterance of Dumah**] There were several places called Dumah (Assyrian *Adumu*, Finzi)—probably a collateral form or derivative of Edom (Assyrian *Udumu*), but none of them were in the mountains of Seir. The analogy of the heading in xxi. i. suggests that this title is not topographical, but mystic, and alludes (Dumah = 'silence') to the desolation in store for Edom. In the Hebr. of Ps. xciv. 17, cxv. 17, Dumah = Hades.——**What part of the night?**] The first, second, or third watch? Will the light soon dawn?

12 **Morning cometh, and also night**] An enigmatical reply in the style of that 'wisdom' which the neighbouring peoples, and not least the Edomites (Obad. 8), loved. Various interpretations have been given. I quote two from Dr. Weir: 'The dawn shall certainly come, but also night; i.e., either the light promised is not to endure always, but to be followed by another and perhaps another period of darkness (contrast lx. 19, 20, and especially Zech. xiv. 7), or that which is morning to some is darkness to others.' I prefer the former. The prophet sees a short day of prosperity followed by a night of trouble. But see the singular rend. in LXX., and crit. note.——**If ye would inquire** (or, seek) . . .] Most explain, 'If you would know the meaning of the riddle, ye may come and ask again.' But why this unceremonious rebuff? Were the Edomites less worthy of prophetic guidance than the Dedanites in the next prophecy? One cannot help feeling that the meaning must be something different. Dr. Kay (following Jerome) thinks 'seek' means 'seek Jehovah,' and 'return, come' = repent (comp. Jer. iii. 22), and so partly Dr. Weir. It may be so, but the sister prophecy in *vv.* 13–17 says nothing of the kind, and 'Jehovah' would hardly have been omitted.

13 **Utterance 'in the evening'**] The words 'in the evening' have been adopted from the sequel by the Hebrew editor as a title (similar cases in xxii. 1, xxx. 6).——**In the thickets**] The caravans had had

thirsty bring forth water, ye inhabitants of the land of Tema; with his bread [e]meet the fugitive. 15 [f]For before the swords have they fled, before the drawn sword, and before the bent bow, and before the pressure of war. 16 For thus hath the Lord said unto me, In a year more, as the years of a hireling, all the glory of Kedar shall be over, and the number that is left of the mighty archers, the sons of Kedar, shall become small, for Jehovah, Israel's God, hath spoken.

[e] So Targ., Ew., Weir.—They met, Hebr. text.
[f] The Sept. of *v.* 15 is lucid, but very different.

to leave the beaten track, and take refuge in a less exposed part of the desert, where shrubs and thornbushes secured them to some extent from observation (see Del.'s note).——**In the evening**] There are two objections to the reading of the vowel-points—one bad and one good. The bad one is that the name Arabia had not arisen as early as Isaiah (Ewald), whereas it occurs under the form Aribi in inscriptions of Shalmaneser and Sargon; the good one is that the limitation 'in Arabia' was very superfluously addressed to the Dedanites. The same confusion between *'erebh* and *'arábh* appears in 2 Chr. ix. 14; comp. 1 Kings x. 15, and in the LXX. of Hab. i. 8.——**Dedanites**] Mentioned by Jeremiah as belonging to Edom (xlix. 8; comp. Ezek. xxv. 13), and again in company with Tema (xxv. 23). A commercial people, Ezek. xxvii. 15, 20.

14 **Tema**] See Job vi. 19, Jer. xxv. 23. On the E. border of the Haurán ranges, a station (now Taimâ) on the route between Palmyra and Petra (Wetzstein).

16 **As the years . . .**] So xvi. 14.——**Kedar**] Here used as a general name for the nomad tribes of Arabia, so as to include Dedan.

CHAPTER XXII.

VERSES 1–14. A prophecy of judgment upon Jerusalem. It is not easy to seize the right point of view for explaining it. After much fluctuation, these are the results to which the study of the prophecy as a whole has led me. In the two opening verses the prophet assumes the attitude of a stranger, and inquires the cause of the crowd on the roofs and the boisterous merriment. How strangely ill-timed! For a part of the population has perished by pestilence, while the warriors have either fled or been taken prisoners. It is a calamity little short of the destruction of the nation, and the prophet gives himself up to sorrow (*v.* 4). True, Jerusalem is still uncaptured, but the seer on his watch-tower foretells that it will not long continue so. A picture unrolls itself before him of tumult and consternation at the troops of fierce soldiery pouring in. *v.* 6 begins a new section.[1] The prophet transports himself mentally to the first appearance of the Assyrian army, and recalls the measures of defence hastily taken by the citizens. In *v.* 12 he describes a state of things

[1] I cannot help conjecturing that something has dropped out, or been omitted, between *vv.* 5, 6, if not also between *vv.* 7, 8.

which began in the past ('in that day'), but reaches into the present. Though misfortune has thus been closing in upon them, the people of Jerusalem have shut their ears to the preaching of repentance. With despair in their hearts, they endeavour to drown thought in sensual pleasure. But from heaven it has been distinctly revealed to the prophet that such an offence is unpardonable, and must be punished by death.

vv. 12, 13 are the key to *vv.* 1, 2. It is the merriment of despair of which the prophet is the spectator. The enemy is before the walls, but there is no thought of turning to Jehovah, who may still deliver. Hence the prophet threatens the city with capture, and the impenitent among its people with death.

It has always been difficult to explain the severe tone of this prophecy, into which not a gleam of hope penetrates. If it belongs, as has been generally supposed, to the invasion of Sennacherib, it seems to me impossible to account for it, as the tone of Isaiah at that great crisis was one of consolation and promise. But now that we know of an earlier invasion—that of Sargon—we are relieved from this difficulty. The circumstances of the prophet were very probably different in the two invasions. In the latter one, there was probably a union of feeling and purpose between the king and the prophet; the preaching, too, of the latter had probably produced some effect on the better minds. It seems to have been otherwise in the time of Sargon; and finding the prophecy of Ariel ineffectual as a means of moral quickening, Isaiah may have deliberately chosen (for the 'spirit of prophecy' does not exclude deliberation) this harder and sharper tone under the double pressure of calamity and opposition. The view here taken is not inconsistent with the reference to Elam in *v.* 6. It is true that Elam was not thoroughly conquered by Sargon, but neither was it subjugated by Sennacherib. The Elamites were continually stirring up trouble in the Assyrian empire in the days of both these kings (comp. on xxi. 1–10). But the Annals of Sargon appear to show that a district or province of Elam was annexed by Sargon as early as 721 (*Records of the Past*, vii. 29), and this is perhaps referred to here under the name of Elam. The combination with Kir shows that Isaiah must intend an integral portion of the Assyrian empire (see on *v.* 6).

[1] [Utterance of the valley of vision.] What aileth thee, then, that all belonging to thee have gone up to the housetops, [2] thou that art full of uproar, a noisy city, a joyous town? Thy slain are not slain with the sword, nor dead in

[1] **Altogether**] The whole population of Jerusalem is criminated in this chapter (see Introd.).——**Gone up to the housetops**] The meaning of this and the first part of the next verse seems to me clear from *v.* 13. It was the forced gaiety of despair which drove the people to the banquet-table, and (we may conclude) to the (flat) house-tops also. The latter appear elsewhere as places of concourse at festivals (Judg. xvi. 27, Neh. viii. 16).——**Not slain with the sword**] There had as yet, therefore, been no actual fighting, but the crowding of

battle. [3]All thy chief men have fled [a]together, without[a] bow they have been made prisoners; all of them that were seized have together been made prisoners—they fled far away. [4] Therefore I say, Look away from me, let me weep bitterly; be not urgent to comfort me for the destruction of the daughter of my people. [5] For a day of discomfiture and of treading down and of perplexity hath the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, in the valley of vision; [b]there is undermining of the

[a] Together from the, Ew., putting (;) at 'bow.'
[b] Kir pierceth through, and Shoa is at the Mount, Ew.

refugees from the country-districts had produced famine (comp. Lam. iv. 9) or pestilence (comp. v. 20, Weir), or both.

[3] **All thy chief men . . .**] The rulers (same word in i. 10) have fled in despair from the devoted city (comp. 2 Kings xxv. 4, Jer. iv. 29), but, meeting the Assyrians, have thrown their bows away and surrendered. Comp. the terror of the 'house of David' on a less great occasion (vii. 2).——**They fled**] i.e., while they were fleeing.

[4] The last stage of calamity can be already foreseen; the prophet describes it as 'the destruction' of his people (same word in xiii. 6, Kay).

[5] **A day**] viz. of judgment (ii. 12). This 'day' is then described in a series of inimitable assonances. We seem to see and hear the last hurrying stages of the siege and capture. ——**The valley** (or, ravine) **of vision**] Probably one of the valleys about Jerusalem, where, as *v.* 7 states, the horsemen had taken up a position towards the gate. The meaning of the phrase must remain uncertain. On the analogy of Joel iv. (iii.) 14[1] it may be conjectured that 'valley of *vision*' should have some reference to the struggle going on at the place so described. ['Multitudes, multitudes in the valley (*'émek*) of decision (= Jehoshaphat); for the day of Jehovah is near in the valley of decision.'] 'Vision' may mean 'a vision of Jehovah directing the struggle; comp. the derivation of Moriah in 2 Chron. iii. 1 ('appearance of Jehovah'). This seems at any rate more natural than Ewald's and Knobel's theory that the phrase designates the quarter where Isaiah lived and received his visions. Others (Ges., Del., comp. Vitr.) have supposed it to be a synonym for Jerusalem, the home of prophecy (comp. Luke xiii. 33). Why, it is asked, should the 'day of discomfiture' be confined to one alone of the valleys of Jerusalem? The only reply is, that it is not really so confined; but the prophet is specially attracted by a spot where the fight was thickest (see above); and on the other hand, we may ask, What propriety is there in calling Jerusalem a 'valley'? It is surely the all but universal practice of the Hebrew writers to describe Jerusalem as a mountain ('mount Zion'), and we may add, to picture the prophets as standing on watch-towers, and not in the valleys. True, the personified people of Jerusalem is addressed in Jer. xxi. 13 as 'inhabiters of the valley' (*'émek*), but this is immediately supplemented by the words, '(even) of the rock of the level country.'——**There is undermining of the wall . . .**] Lit., one undermineth. There were iron tools specially designed for this work (comp. Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.*, v. 4. 2. The prophet seems

[1] Long after writing the above, I see that Naeg. has compared the same passage, but with a very different result.

wall, and a crying (soundeth) unto the mountains.[b] [6] And Elam carried the quiver with troops of men, of horsemen, and Kir made bare the shield; [7] and when thy choice valleys were full of troops, and the horsemen had set themselves in line towards the gate, [8] then did he draw aside the covering of Judah, and thou didst look in that day to the armour of the forest-house, [9] and ye saw that the breaches of David's city

to hear the wall give way with a crash (note the sound-painting in *m'karkar ktr* and cf. 2 Sam. xx. 15, 1 Kings xx. 30) and the piercing cry of the terrified citizens.—By 'the mountain' (so literally) Knobel and others understand mount Zion ('from whence cometh my help'); Hitzig, the mount of Olives. But it seems more natural, as there is no limitation of the meaning (on the ordinary construction of the passage), to take it, with Ges., Del., collectively (comp. 'mount Ephraim' i.e., the hill-country of Ephraim).

[6] **Elam**] See Introd. and note on xi. 11.——**Kir**] The region to which Tiglath-Pileser transported the Damascenes (2 Kings xvi. 9), and from which, according to Am. ix. 7, the Arameans came. This has been generally identified with the district by the river Cyrus (the modern Georgia). But, besides the linguistic objection pointed out by Del. (Kir cannot = Kur), it appears that the Assyrian empire never extended to the Cyrus. We must therefore consider Kir to be a part of Mesopotamia (Wetzstein, *ap.* Delitzsch).——**Made bare the shield**] i.e., took away its leathern covering, comp. Cæs. *de Bell. Gall.*, ii. 21 (Hitz.) See on xxxvii. 33.

[7] **Thy choice valleys**] Jerusalem was almost surrounded by valleys, e.g., Kidron, Gihon, Rephaim, Hinnom. Comp. Josephus, *de Bell. Jud.*, v. 4. 1.——**Had set themselves in line**] i.e., ready to enter as soon as 'the gate' was broken through by the rams, comp. Ezek. xxi. 22 (27). It is the 'great gate' referred to by Sennacherib (Taylor's cylinder), who boasts of having 'caused them to break through' it. The remains are still to be seen, says Lieut. Conder.

[8] **Then did he draw aside . . .**] The subject is Jehovah (comp. *v.* 5). 'Drawing aside the curtain' means either exposing the utter weakness of the state to the enemy (Ew., Meier), or, opening the eyes of the Judeans to their danger, comp. xxix. 10, 18 (Hitz., Knob., Del.). The former view seems the more suitable.—Here begins the account of the measures of defence taken by the citizens. Very similar is the Chronicler's account of Hezekiah's preparations for the siege of Sennacherib, 2 Chr. xxxii. 2–5, 30 (see *Q. P. B.*), and as the memory of Sargon's siege had faded away by the time of the Chronicler, it is possible that there is a confusion between the precautions taken on these two occasions. The compiler of Kings alludes briefly to some of the same measures as the Chronicler, but does not assign a date (2 Kings xx. 20). It was of course a matter of primary importance to prevent the enemy from using the water of the fountains (see on vii. 3). Sargon gives a similar account of the preparations for the siege of Ashdod (Smith, *Assyrian Discoveries*, p. 291 top), 'And they brought the waters of the springs in front of the city.' The first step of the citizens, however, is to look after the supply of arms. ——**The forest-house**]—'the house of the forest of Lebanon,' a part of Solomon's palace, which was used as an arsenal (1 Kings vii. 2, x. 17, comp. Isa. xxxix. 2).

[9] **And ye saw . . .**] 'Ye,' i.e., the princes, who practically monopolised the government (comp. on vii. 2,

were many, and ye collected the water of the lower pool, [10] and the houses of Jerusalem ye counted, and ye broke down the houses to fortify the wall, [11] and ye made a lake between the two walls for the water of the old pool; but ye looked not unto him who made it, and him who formed it from afar ye did not regard. [12] And the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, called in that day to weeping, and to lamentation, and to baldness, and to girding with sackcloth; [13] but behold, joy and gladness, killing oxen and slaughtering sheep, eating flesh and drinking wine, 'Eat and drink, for to-morrow we shall die.' [14] But it is made known in my ears, [saith]

xxii. 1). ——**The city of David**] i.e., the fortress Zion, 2 Sam. v. 7, 9. ——**The lower pool**] Is this to be distinguished from the Birket es-Sultân (the 'lower pool' corresponding to the 'upper pool' of vii. 3)? Lewin thinks that it is, and identifies it with the pool made by Hezekiah, according to 2 Kings xx. 20.

[10] **The houses . . . ye counted**] Partly to see how many could be spared, partly for the inhabitants to identify their property. ——**To fortify the wall**] To withstand the shocks of the battering-rams. So 2 Chr. xxxii. 5 'and he built up all the wall that was broken, and raised thereupon towers,' and Jer. xxxiii. 4 'the houses . . . which are thrown down because of (i.e., to resist) the mounds and because of the engines of war.'[1]

[11] **A lake**] i.e., a large pool, or reservoir. ——**Between the two walls**] i.e., between that of Ophel on the east, and that of the High Tower on the west, where the Tyropæon valley is particularly narrow. ——**The old pool**] Either the 'Pool of Siloam,' or the 'King's Pool' (Neh. ii. 14). Comp. Lewin, *Siege of Jerusalem*, p. 284, *Recovery of Jerusalem*, p. 238. ——**But ye looked not**] A contrast to 'thou didst look' (*v.* 8). ——**Who made it . . . formed it**] i.e., in the counsels of eternity, as appears from xxxvii. 26 (same words). Comp. on v. 12.

[12] **And the Lord . . . called**] i.e., the prophet, God's messenger, or perhaps the silent march of events, called upon you to repent; penitence might have turned the Divine purpose, Joel ii. 14.

[13] But no moral effect has been produced by calamity. They rush to the banquet-table with despair in their hearts, and waste the provisions which ought to be husbanded for the siege. ——**For to-morrow we shall die**] It is doubted whether these words are quoted in mockery from the prophet (Ges.), or whether they express the sensualism of despair (Hitz.). The latter view is simpler and more natural.

[14] **But it is made known . . .**] The Rabbis understand 'this thing' for a subject, and 'saith' before 'Jehovah Sabáoth' (or else explain as if they read 'I am Jehovah Sabáoth'). The current rendering is very forced. There is a similar uncertainty about the text of v. 9, which has also been treated too hastily by the moderns. ——**Shall not be cancelled . . .**] Death shall indeed overtake you by the

[1] *Khérebh* is from a root meaning to pierce (comp. *khôr*, a hole), and can therefore just as well be applied to a battering-ram (or to some similar engine) as to a sword. Here, as in Jer. v. 17, Ezek. xxvi. 9, the rendering 'engines of war' seems to be required. For pictures of battering-rams, see Bonomi's *Nineveh and its Palaces*, p. 163; notice their lance-headed extremities.

Jehovah Sabáoth; surely this iniquity shall not be cancelled unto you till ye die, saith the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth.

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vv. 15-25. Denunciation of Shebna and promises to Eliakim. Probably this prophecy was written a short time before the invasion of Sennacherib, for in the narrative of this event Shebna is represented as holding a lower office (see on *vv.* 20–24).

15 Thus saith the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, Go, get thee unto this Deputy, even unto Shebna, who is over the house. 16 What (right) hast thou here, and whom hast thou here, that

hand of the enemy (as A. E. rightly explains), as the punishment of your guilt. 'Some of the Jewish writers understand the words to mean "at death, but not before," and draw the inference that death does or may atone for sin' (Alexander). But it is not a Biblical idea that a sinner who has borne his punishment is thereby released from guilt. Punishment has only the effect of expiation when borne by the innocent on behalf of the guilty. See Riehm, *Der Begriff der Sühne*, u.s.w., *Theol. Studien u. Kritiken*, 1877, Hft. 1. Isaiah's threat is therefore precisely parallel to 1 Sam. iii. 14.

15 **This Deputy**] 'This,' with a touch of disparagement (as vi. 9). 'Deputy,' lit., companion. Dr. Biesenthal compares the Homeric *θεράπων*, at once comrade and servant, = minister, and this is probably correct. The phrase seems to be synonymous with 'friend' (or associate) of the king,' Gen. xxvi. 26, 2 Sam. xv. 37, 1 Kings iv. 5, which has come to be a quasi-official title, like 'prime-*minister*.' Brugsch mentions a similar title at the court of Egypt, though apparently it was not confined (as in Jerusalem), to a single person. The word for 'deputy' (*soken*) is genuine Hebrew, though it reminds us irresistibly of the familiar Assyrian term *saknu* (stat. constr. *sakan*) 'deputy,' 'representative,' and the two words *may* have a common origin.[1] Shebna appears to have combined this with another office, that of 'house-steward' (mentioned separately 1 Kings iv. 6). The importance of the latter is shown by the fact that it was once held by a 'king's son,' 2 Chr. xxvi. 21, and by the order of the court-officers in xxxvi. 3, xxxvii. 2. It has been compared to the Frankish office of Mayor of the Palace. ——**Shebna**] From his father's name not being mentioned, it is probable that Shebna was not a native Israelite; his name (which is in the Aramaic 'emphatic state' points to a Syrian origin. If he was a refugee from Damascus, he would naturally be an advocate of an Egyptianizing policy, and would thus be one of the 'crooked' politicians, whom the prophet inveighs against in xxx. 12. The brother of the famous Rabbi Hillel was also called Shebna.

16 Shebna, like eastern grandees generally (comp. Joseph of Arimathea, Eshmunazar king of Sidon, the Pharaohs and Caliphs of Egypt, &c.), builds himself a sepulchre in his lifetime. Comp. xiv. 18, '*thy* grave.'——**What (right) hast thou here?**] Shebna's offence is aggravated by his being a foreigner. Even at a much later time a 'potter's field' was good

[1] There is no phonetic difficulty. It is true *saknu* was afterwards adopted by the Hebrews under the form *sâgân*, but they got it through the Babylonian *sagnu*.

thou hewest thee out here a sepulchre? hewing him out his sepulchre on high, carving him out in the rock a habitation! [17] Behold, Jehovah will [c]hurl, will hurl thee, O man,[c] and clutch thee tightly; [18] he will roll thee up (and toss thee) as a ball into a broad country; thither shalt thou go to die, and thither shall go thy glorious chariots, thou disgrace of the house of thy lord! [19] And I will thrust thee from thy post, and from thy station shall he pull thee down. [20] And it shall come to pass in that day that I will call my servant Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, [21] and I will clothe him with thy robe, and with thy girdle will I bind him, and thy authority will I give into his hand, and he shall be a father to the inhabitants of Jerusalem and to the house of Judah; [22] and I will lay the key of the house of David upon his back, so that he shall open and none shall shut, and he shall shut and none shall open.

[c] Cast thee with a man's (i.e., a manly) cast, Del.

enough 'to bury strangers in' (Matt. xxvii. 7). 'Here,' i.e., in Jerusalem; note the indignant repetition.——**On high**] Not necessarily on mount Zion (Knob.), or on its eastern slope (Del.). Tombs have been found on the slopes of all the hills about Jerusalem.——**A habitation**] Comp. Eccles. xii. 5, 'his everlasting house' i.e., the grave, a phrase which also occurs in Phœnician (*Inscr. Melit.* ii. 1).——**O man**] I formerly rendered 'O mighty man,' supposing a touch of irony in the phrase. This is certainly suggested by the etymology, but is not favoured by the use of the word elsewhere, especially in Job, where it several times occurs (but without irony), in strong contrast with God (see iv. 17, x. 5, xxii. 2).——**A broad country**] i.e., the plains of Mesopotamia.

[19] Note the change of person; Jehovah is the subject, however, in both clauses.

[20-24] Nomination of Eliakim. We have only evidence of a partial fulfilment of Isaiah's authoritative word. Eliakim was house-steward, and Shebna merely secretary, when the Rab-shakeh came to Jerusalem (xxxvi. 3). Perhaps this was all that Hezekiah was able to effect against the opposition of the 'princes.' Isaiah evidently predicts a complete change of system, which would consist in the total abstinence from a policy of expediency and worldly alliances. Hence the strong language, almost Messianic in its tone, with which Isaiah hails in spirit the elevation of his disciple Eliakim.

[21] **Robe . . . girdle**] The official dress of a high officer of state. The 'robe' is the long, sleeved tunic worn by people of rank, e.g., Joseph and Tamar (Vitr.). The girdle (*abhnet*) is a costly one, such as priests wore (see Jos. *Ant.* iii. 7. 2).——**Into his hand**] Comp. Jer. xxxiv. 1 (Hebr.).——**A father**] The term is used of a prime minister in Gen. xlv. 8, 1 Macc. xi. 32; of the chief men of a town (1 Chr. ii. 24, iv. 5, &c., Ew.). Comp. ix. 6, Job xxix. 16, Judg. v. 7.

[22] **I will lay the key . . . .**] The 'key' is here much more than the badge of the steward's office; it symbolizes the authority of the 'Deputy,' the royal representative. See on ix. 6, and comp. Matt. xvi. 19, Rev. iii. 7.

23 And I will strike him as a peg into a sure place, and he shall be for a seat of honour to his father's house; 24 and they shall hang upon him all the honour of his father's house, the scions and the offshoots, all the vessels of small size, from the bowl-shaped vessels to all pitcher-like vessels. 25 In that day —an oracle of Jehovah Sabáoth—the peg that is struck into a sure place shall give way; it shall be cut down and shall fall, and the burden upon it shall perish, for Jehovah hath spoken.

CHAPTER XXIII.

AN elegy, in three stanzas or strophes (*vv.* 1–5, 6–9, 10–14), on the fall of Tyre, followed by a kind of appendix on the future revival of the merchant-city. For an analysis, see *I. C. A.*, p. 55.

There have been great differences of opinion as to the date of this prophecy, several eminent critics supposing that the siege referred to is that of Nebuchadnezzar (comp. Ezek. xxvi. 4–21). The main argument in favour of this view is derived from *v.* 13. Taking this verse together with the next, it was not unnatural to suppose that the Chaldeans were thus prominently mentioned as the future destroyers of Tyre. But there is another view of the verse, and one, moreover, which is exegetically easier, viz. that the fate of the Chaldeans is pointed to as a warning for Tyre:—Babylonia had fallen a prey to Assyria, how should Tyre escape?

23 24 Description of Eliakim's tenure of office.——**As a peg into a sure place**] i.e., into a good solid wall—not mere plaster, as in an ordinary house—so as to be able to support a large number of vessels. (Comp. Zech. x. 4, where 'peg' = prince).

23 **All the honour of his father's house**] This is a strange expression, as it has to cover the undistinguished members of Eliakim's family as well as the distinguished. 'Honour' must be almost equivalent to 'multitude' (so Hitz., Del.), and no doubt the importance of a family ('father's house' = family) depended chiefly on its numbers. The entire passage, too, is strange, seeming, as it does, to give the Divine sanction to family-partiality. I say 'seeming,' because I suspect that the fall with which Eliakim in his turn is threatened is the punishment of an evil tendency which Isaiah noticed in Eliakim.—— **Offshoots**] A contemptuous expression (cognate word Ezek. iv. 15).

25 **The peg**] It is doubted whether this refers to Shebna or Eliakim; but surely '*the* peg' must be identical with that mentioned in the preceding verses. There is nothing strange in the anticipation that a high *eastern* official should not be in favour for ever, and that his fall should involve the ruin of his adherents. The difficulty lies in the words 'in that day,' which seem to co-ordinate, by way of contrast, the event here spoken of with that in *v.* 19. But we need not interpret the phrase so strictly. It may, in *v.* 25, merely imply that at the very time when Eliakim's connections are basking in the sunshine of prosperity, a sudden change shall come. Thus Jehovah will 'profane the pride of all glory' (xxiii. 9).

This view, natural as it is, could not, however, have been entertained until it was possible to show that Babylonia had really been thus severely chastised by her powerful neighbour. Now that this has been done—now that we know that Sargon (not to mention Sennacherib) conquered Babylonia in the year 709 (see on xxi. 1–10), there seems nothing to prevent us from assigning the prophecy to any of the next following years.[1] The selfishness and injustice on which the Tyrian empire was based were to the prophet a sure guarantee of its overthrow, and a special revelation appears to have warned him to expect the event about this time. Sargon himself expressly claims to have 'subjugated the city of Çurru' (Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 76).

This is the earliest date to which the prophecy can be assigned. It is just possible, however, that the city of Çurru is not Tyre after all, as no stress is laid upon its capture, and a reference follows to 'the land of Kui,' the situation of which is a matter of dispute. We may, therefore, equally well refer the prophecy to the reign of Sennacherib, who certainly conquered both Babylonia and Tyre. 'Fear at my approach,' says that king, 'overwhelmed Elulæus (Luli) the king of Zidon, and . . . to (Yatnana) which is in the midst of the sea he fled, and quitted his country' (*Records of the Past*, vii. 61). Yatnana = Cyprus; comp. *v.* 12 of this chapter.

The minor key in which this prophecy is pitched reminds us of xxi. 1–10. Tyre, Babylon, and Judah were fellow-sufferers from Assyria. 'The poetical art of the piece is in a very high degree finished,' remarks Ewald, who, however, finds the 'elevation, magnificence, and energetic brevity' of Isaiah wholly wanting, and suspects (as in the case of chap. xxxiii.) that a younger contemporary and disciple of the prophet is the author. This is possible, as many phenomena converge to show that Isaiah's works were not always edited by himself; but I am particularly loth to deny so artistic a work to this great and, as Ewald admits, many-sided prophet.

[1] [Utterance of Tyre.] Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for it is laid waste, so that there is no house, no entering in! From the land of Chittim it has been disclosed unto them. [2] Be dumb, ye inhabitants of the coast, which Zidon's merchants who pass over the sea replenished. [3] And on great waters was

[1] **No house . . .**] The fleets are homeward-bound from the western colonies. At their very last place of call—Cyprus, they hear the sad tidings that their harbour and their homes are desolate.

[2] **The coast**] i.e., the Phœnician coast (so *v.* 6). True, this involves a tautology with the next line, since Zidon also = Phœnicia (as 1 Kings xi. 1, Gen. x. 15), but see on xvi. 7.

[3] **On great waters**] i.e., on the ocean-highway (comp. Ps. cvii. 23, Ezek. xxvii. 26).——**Shihor**] i.e., the Nile, as Jer. ii. 18. Properly the dark grey (see on xiv. 12), from the colour of the water. A *Semitic* name for the Nile.—On the con-

[1] Dr. Tiele was the first to see the bearing of Assyrian discovery on this chapter. Comp. his *Vergelijkende geschiedenis*, p. 707.

the seed of Shihor; the harvest of the River was its ingathering, and it became [a]the gain[a] of the nations. 4 Be ashamed, O Zidon, for the sea, the stronghold of the sea, speaketh, saying, I have not been in travail, nor brought forth, nor reared young men, nor brought up virgins. 5 When the tidings come to Egypt they shall be sore pained at the tidings of Tyre.— 6 Pass ye over to Tarshish; howl, ye inhabitants of the coast! 7 [b]Is this, to your sorrow, the joyous one,[b] whose origin is of ancient days, whose feet [c]were wont to carry[c] her afar off to sojourn? 8 Who hath devised this against Tyre, the giver of crowns, whose merchants were princes, whose traders were

[a] The mart, Ges., Ew.
[b] Fareth it thus with you, O joyous one, Del.
[c] Carry, Ges., Ew.

nection of Phœnicia and Egypt, see Ezek. xxvii. 7. Movers, *Die Phönizier*, ii. 3, pp. 314–336, Ebers, *Egypten und die Bücher Mosis*, i. 147, &c. The Egyptians had no timber to build seaworthy ships; hence their foreign trade was carried on for them by the Phœnicians. ——**The gain**] Not 'mart,' for the Phœnicians themselves distributed their wares, and these in their turn became a source of gain to other nations (Del. after Luzzatto).

4 **Be ashamed, O Zidon**] i.e., O Phœnicia. Tyrian coins bear the legend 'Of Tyre, mother (= chief city) of the Zidonians'——**The stronghold of the sea**] i.e., the insulated ledge of rocks on which new Tyre was built, Ezek. xxvi. 5, 14. In the following words, Tyre is aptly described as daughter of the sea, but (a figure to express the completeness of the ruin) denied by her own mother.

5 **They shall be sore pained**] Tyre being, as it were, an outpost of Egypt against the Assyrians.

6 **To Tarshish**] The prophet counsels the Phœnicians to emigrate to their Spanish colonies, as their fate has been determined by the fall of the capital. So at the siege of Tyre by Alexander, the Tyrians sent their old men, women and children to Carthage (Diod. xvii. 41, Knob.), which LXX. even makes them do here (εἰς Καρχηδόνα). Comp. Layard's plate 71, 'Enemies of the Assyrians taking refuge in ships.'

7 A question of perplexity and surprise (comp. xiv. 16). Is this heap of ruins all that remains of the joyous, the ancient, the restlessly energetic Tyre? (see crit. note). ——**Joyous**] as Zeph. ii. 15.—— **Of ancient days**] see Herod. ii. 44, Josephus, *Ant.* viii. 3. 1.—— **Whose feet were wont . . .**] Alluding to the distant commercial journeys of the Tyrians. Alt. rend. may be explained in two ways,—of captivity (Ges.), or of flight (Ew.). Either way is plausible. The first is supported by the striking verbal parallel in 2 Kings xxi. 8 (overlooked by Ges); the second gives a special force to the words 'to sojourn,' which will mean that the Phœnician fugitives are to be only tolerated μέτοικοι (= *gērīm*) in their own colonies. But I think the context decides that the clause must contain a feature, not of the present Tyre, but of the past. In this case, too, 'to sojourn' is a perfectly accurate phrase.

8 **The giver of crowns**], viz., to the kings of the Phœnician colonies, perhaps also of the other Phœnician cities. Modern parallels will occur to everyone.

the honourable of the earth? [9] Jehovah Sabáoth hath devised it, to desecrate the pride of all glory, to disgrace all the honourable of the earth.—[10] Overflow thy land as the Nile; O daughter of Tarshish, there is no girdle any more. [11] His hand he stretched out over the sea, he made kingdoms to tremble; Jehovah Sabáoth gave charge concerning Canaan, to destroy the fortresses thereof. [12] He said, Thou shalt not continue to exult, thou ravished virgin-daughter of Zidon; arise, pass over to Chittim; even there thou shalt have no rest. [13] Behold the land of [d] Chaldea; this people is no more;

[d] Canaanites, Ew. (conj.).

[9] **To desecrate**] So Ezek. xxviii. 7. Beauty having a kind of natural sanctity (comp. Lev. xix. 29, Heb.). There is no occasion to imagine a special reference to the temples of Tyre (as Knob., Del.).

[10] The fall of Tyre is the signal for the emancipation of her colonies. About this time we hear of a revolt of Cyprus, and the Phœnician cities assisting Shalmaneser (or Sargon) in the siege of Tyre—Josephus, *Ant.* ix. 14. 2. Tarshish, or Tartessus, with its silver mines, may well have been, as Strachey remarks, the hardest treated of all the colonies.——**As the Nile**] 'The river that least regards any bounds.'——**There is no girdle**] The expression is strange. It looks at first as if it referred to Tarshish (comp. iii. 24), but this does not suit the context. Naeg. supposes an allusion to some dues or toll demanded on passing a barrier (instead of 'girdle').

[11] **Kingdoms**] i.e., especially those of Phœnicia and Syria,—hence 'over the sea.'——**Gave charge**] So of Jehovah's instruments, xiii. 2.——**Canaan**] i.e., Phœnicia, comp. Josh. v. 1, LXX. The word means 'depression,' and was therefore applied to various lowland-districts of Syria.

[12] The fate of Tyre shall be shared by all Phœnicia, here called the **daughter of Zidon**—hence the plural 'strongholds' in *v.* 11. ——**Thou shalt have no rest**] For the long arm of Assyria will reach them even there. The importance of Cyprus as a naval station was recognised by the Babylonians fifteen or sixteen centuries B.C. The Inscription of Sargon, king of Agané, relates how 'the sea of the setting sun he crossed,' and in the third year conquered a land which can hardly be any other than Cyprus, as Mr. Boscawen has pointed out. The inscription is translated in part by Mr. G. Smith, *Transactions of Soc. Bibl. Arch*, ii. 49–51. Cyprus was also, as we have seen, conquered by the Assyrian Sargon.

[13] The prophet concludes by pointing to a recent event, foreshadowing the fate of Phœnicia. In the first half of the verse he speaks of the *land* of Chaldea; in the second, of its capital—Babylon, the fall of which involved that of the land. The subject in the latter part is throughout Assyria. For the change of number, comp. v. 23, 26.——**Chaldea**] Hebr. Kasdim. 'In the cuneiform documents Kaldi is a tribe of the great nation of Accad, which became entirely predominant in the *southern* provinces [on the lower Euphrates] from the ninth century B.C., but certainly existed previously' (Lenormant). 'Under Merodach-Baladan [they] made themselves so important and integral a part of its (Babylonia's) population as to give their name to the whole country' (Sayce). There is, therefore, no historical reason why Isaiah should

Assyria hath appointed it for desert-beasts; they set up their towers, they laid low their palaces; he hath made it a ruin. [14] Howl, ye ships of Tarshish, for your fortress is laid waste!—[15] And it shall come to pass in that day that Tyre shall be forgotten seventy years, as the days of one king; at the end of seventy years it shall be unto Tyre as in the song of the harlot: [16] 'Take the lute, go round the city, forgotten harlot! Play skilfully, sing many songs, that thou mayest be remembered.' [17] And it shall come to pass that at the end of seventy years the Lord shall visit Tyre, and she shall return to her hire, and play the harlot with all kingdoms of the earth on the face of the ground. [18] And her earnings and her hire shall be holy unto Jehovah; it shall not be stored up nor hoarded, but to those who dwell before Jehovah

not have used the term 'land of Kasdim' for Babylonia, the conquest of which by Sargon might not unnaturally be referred to in this connection (see Introd.). For other, now antiquated, views, see *Notes and Criticisms*, pp. 22–26, and *I. C. A.*, p. 59.——**For desert-beasts**] Comp. xiii. 21, xxxiv. 14, Jer. l. 39. Ps. lxxiv. 14, and see *Notes and Criticisms, ad loc.*——**Their towers**] i.e., their siege-works.——**Laid low**] Lit., laid bare (the foundations of).

15-18 Yet seventy years, and Tyre shall be restored to prosperity, and devote her profits to Jehovah. Comp. the appendix on the conversion of Egypt, chapter xix.——**Seventy years**]. Most expositors regard these seventy years as those of the Babylonian captivity, according to Jer. xxv. 11, 12. But it is strange that Isaiah should specify the duration of the captivity in connection with Tyre, and not with Judah. Is it not rather bold to suppose a lost prophecy on the subject of the length of the captivity, which is what these expositors ought in consistency to do, unless they are prepared to bring down the appendix to the age of Jeremiah? It is surely allowable to understand these seventy years as a conventional expression for a long period, just as 'forty years' is used elsewhere (Ezek. xxix. 13, see *Speaker's Comm.*). Seven is a sacred number, and 'the decade denotes the fulfilment of times, after which a new æon begins.'——**As the days of one king**] Meaning not that there should really be only one king during these seventy years, but that the condition of Tyre should remain as unchanged as if there were, an Oriental king being too proud to reverse a decree (Esth. viii. 8).——**The song of the harlot**] Apparently some well-known song, a fragment of which follows. Commerce, as having regard to purely worldly interests, is called 'harlotry,' comp. 'the iniquity of his covetousness,' lvii. 17. A further parallel between Tyre and the harlot or *bayadere* (ballatrix) of this song lies in the conditionalness of the renewal of prosperity. Commerce shall revive, but only as the handmaid of religion.

[18] **Holy unto Jehovah**] Inconsistent apparently with Deut. xxiii. 18, but the Biblical writers only adhere to their metaphors so far as suits their purpose.——**Not be stored up**] Comp. Zech. ix. 3, Joel iii. 5.——**Those who dwell before Jehovah**] i.e., the people of Jerusalem, or, perhaps, more widely the Israelites, whose religious centre was the temple, comp. Ps. xxvii. 4. It

shall her earnings belong for sufficiency of eating and for splendid clothing.

CHAPTERS XXIV.–XXVII.

AN imaginative picture of the overthrow of the mighty power which, at the real or assumed period of the prophecy, held the Jews in bondage, interwoven with descriptions of the unhappy state of God's people prior to their deliverance, and of the glorious lot reserved for them. This is introduced by an equally imaginative picture of the Divine judgment upon the whole world, and references to the world-wide extent of the judgment recur at intervals. This is not the first time we have met with an apparent identification of a temporary judgment upon the Jews with the great final judgment upon the world :—see on ii. 12, iii. 13, xiii. 9. It is, however, simply a combination and not a confusion. The Jews have had special privileges; they are the 'house of God,' and judgment naturally 'begins' with them (comp. 1 Pet. iv. 17), and with the nations with whom their fortunes have been linked.—The historical situation, it must be candidly admitted, is described in highly enigmatical language (see below), and it is not unnatural that some critics (both in Calvin's day and in our own) have denied its existence altogether. Among these Del. and Naeg. may be specially mentioned, who regard this group of chapters as throughout a symbolically expressed prediction of a still future judgment upon the world, and to whom the 'city of chaos' is neither Babylon, nor Susa, nor Jerusalem, but the centre (localise it where you please), of the antitheistic world. *Quod mihi nimis coactum videtur* (Calvin); the theory compels us to empty the most striking expressions of their meaning, and is also contrary to the analogy of other prophecies. On the other hand, the view adopted above is both natural in itself, and is supported by the position of these chapters in the Book of Isaiah. The latter point was clearly seen by Calvin. 'As far as I can judge,' says he, 'this prophecy is the close of all the preceding ones, from chap. xiii. onwards . . . Having as it were traversed all the regions near to and known by the Jews, Isaiah briefly sums up their contents.' Even those who regard the prophecy as anonymous may recognise the propriety of the place which it has received in the book. They will not of course agree with Naegelsbach that the prophet is here describing the final stage in a great judgment of God upon the Gentile nations, of which the denunciations in chaps. xiii.–xxiii. represent the preliminaries. Looking at the prophecy as a whole in itself, not written for its present position, however admirably it may fill it, they will rather

is not said 'those who stand before Jehovah;' that would mean the priests.——**For sufficiency of eating**] Implying that the prophet wrote at a time of great scarcity, or when a scarcity might be apprehended. This may of course be harmonized with a post-exile date (comp. Hag. i., Zech. viii. 12), but also with the times of Isaiah (i. 7, iii. 1, 7).

regard the judgment here denounced upon Israel's enemies as the second stage in the great trial, the Babylonian captivity being the first ('thy chastening,' xxvi. 16).

As for the vagueness or mysteriousness of the language, this ought to be no difficulty to those who recognise in any degree the eschatological purport of the prophecy. The more the authors of the prophetic or apocalyptic literature have their minds directed to the 'latter days,' the more mysterious becomes their language, the greater their tendency to wide and general expressions.

[1] Behold, Jehovah [a] will pour [a] out the [b] earth, and empty it, and turn it upside down, and scatter its inhabitants; [2] and it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the servant, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the taker, so with the giver, of money. [3] The earth shall be poured clean out, and utterly spoiled, for Jehovah hath spoken this word. [4] The earth mourneth, it withereth; the world languisheth, it withereth; the highnesses of the people of the earth languish. [5] The earth is become profane under its inhabitants, for they have transgressed commandments, violated the statute, broken the perpetual covenant; [6] therefore hath a

[a] Poureth, Hitz. (See below.)
[b] Land, Ges. (So throughout.)

[1] **Behold . . .**] 'Behold' with a participle, in the prophets, almost always points to the future (iii. 1, vii. 14, xvii. 1, &c.). This favours the view of Ew., Del., Naeg., that the whole of chap. xxiv. is predictive. Others (Hitz., Knob., Kuenen, &c.) take it as a description of events which are actually taking place; this may seem to be confirmed by the perfects. But surely it suits the imaginative character of the work better to regard these as prophetic—as proceeding from the point of view of one who had attained a specially clear insight into the eternal purposes of God.

[2] **So with the priest**] It is inferred by some that at the real or assumed standing-point of this prophecy the priests were the paramount power in Judah. It may be so—there is the same prominence given to the priests in Joel. But perhaps the prophet selects those simplest of relations which extend to the lowest ranks of society. Every one comes into contact with a priest, but not every one with a king.

[3] **Spoiled**] The prophet transfers to the world a feature which belongs properly to the fallen empire of Israel's oppressors.

[5] **The earth is become profane . . .**] 'For blood profaneth the land,' Num. xxxv. 33; comp. Ps. cvi. 38. The blood-shedding by which the great empires of the East were founded (comp. xxvi. 21) was a violation of that elementary **statute** on which the **perpetual covenant** with Noah and his sons was based. The latter phrase seems to be a direct allusion to Gen. ix. 16:—it can hardly refer to the special covenant of circumcision (Gen. xvii. 13), or of the Sab-

curse devoured the earth, and those who dwell in it are dealt with as guilty, therefore the inhabitants of the earth are scorched, and few men left. [7] The grapes mourn, the vine languisheth, all the merry-hearted do sigh. [8] The joy of timbrels is hushed; the uproar of the exulting ones hath ceased; the joy of the lute is hushed. [9] They shall not drink wine with song; strong drink shall be bitter to those who drink it. [10] Broken to pieces is the city of chaos; every house is shut up, not to be entered. [11] In the [e] fields is a crying because of the wine; all gladness has set; the joy of the earth is banished. [12] Of the city there is left desolation, and the gate is battered into ruins.

[13] For so shall it be within the earth in the midst of the peoples, as at the beating of the olive, as at the grape-gleaning

[e] Streets, Naeg.

bath (Ex. xxxi. 16), for it is a judgment upon the earth exclusive of Israel (see xxvi. 20, 21), which the prophet is describing. The phrases 'precepts,' and 'statute,' mean more than 'the law written in the heart' (A. E., Del.), and are best explained by the same passage in Genesis. Obs., 'commandments' in the plural occurs only here in Isaiah.

[6] Jehovah has recalled his promise not to bring a second deluge upon the earth (see on *v.* 18).——**A curse**] Personified, as in Zech. v. 3, Dan. ix. 11, Jer. xxiii. 10 (where there is almost the same paronomasia). Comp. on ix. 8.——**Are scorched**] By the 'burning anger' (xxx. 27) of Jehovah.

[7, 8] Gesenius finds here an imitation of Joel i. 10–12; Vitringa compares a striking passage in the prayer of Judah the Maccabee, 1 Macc. iii. 45, which he regards as describing the fulfilment of this prediction. Music at feasts, as v. 12.

[9] **Strong drink . . .**] Understand, 'If there be any;' otherwise the description will be inconsistent.

[10] **The city of chaos**] i.e., the city which is destined to become a very chaos (*tōhū*), its outer and inner order being destroyed, and no germ of life remaining. It is an allusion to the narrative (oral or written) of the Creation; comp. 'And the earth was waste and wild' (*tōhū va-bōhū*), Gen. i. 2. It is the most striking expression for utter desolation which the prophet could have chosen, and is specially characteristic of the Book of Isaiah, for 11 out of the 20 passages in which it occurs in the Old Testament are in Isaiah. I ought to add that of these 11 passages, 10 occur in prophecies of disputed authorship.——**Shut up**] Inaccessible owing to its ruinous condition.

[11] **A crying because of the wine**] 'Awake, ye drunkards, and weep; and howl, all ye drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine, because it is cut off from your mouth,' Joel i. 5. Comp. also xv. 8–10. Hitz. remarks that *v.* 11 is an *unda redundans* of *vv.* 8, 9; and *v.* 12 of *v.* 10.

[13] 'For,' in fact, the condition of the world (or, possibly, of the region once ruled over by Israel's oppressors) will then be like that of an olive-tree after the regular beating (xvii. 6), or of the vine-plants when the vintage is over. There

when the vintage is done. [14] Those shall lift up their voice, they shall ring out a cry; because of Jehovah's majesty they shall shout aloud from the sea:—[15] 'Therefore in the [d] countries glorify ye Jehovah; in the countries of the sea the name of Jehovah, Israel's God!' [16] From the skirt of the earth we have heard songs, 'Honour (is come) for the righteous!' But I said, Wasting away is for me, wasting away is for me, alas for me! The barbarous deal barbarously, and the barbarous deal very barbarously. [17] A terror and a pit and a snare are

[d] So Sept., Lowth, Hitz.—Heb. text, lights.

will be indeed a remnant out of all that multitude of 'peoples,' but how small will be that remnant! Of whom will it consist? Of the Jewish nation, no doubt; but also of some of the Gentiles; for a kindred prophet writes, 'Whosoever shall invoke the name of Jehovah shall be delivered' (Joel ii. 32). It must be a part of this remnant, whose chorus of praise to the God of Israel echoes **from the** (Mediterranean) **sea** (*v.* 14). But the survivors are not all gathered in one place. Hence they call upon other escaped ones **in the** (distant) **countries of the sea** (*v.* 15) to acknowledge and to praise the hand of Jehovah. The description is obscure, but there is a general parallel in xlii. 10–12, where the various regions of the earth—the (far) 'countries' are also mentioned—are called upon to praise Jehovah for his great work of deliverance. Obs. in passing the instance which *v.* 15 supplies of that ascending rhythm, characteristic of this prophecy—'in the countries . . . in the countries of the sea;' comp. xxv. 5, xxvi. 3-7, 11, 15 (Judg. v., Pss. xxix., cxxi., cxxiv.). For how a Hebrew prophet can have written 'the lights' (or rather 'the flames') for the East, is to me simply unintelligible, and the comparison of lix. 19, Hom. *Iliad*, xii. 329, does not lessen the difficulty. A. E. has already the right rendering 'in the regions,' though he has to force it out of the received text by comparing 'Ur of the Chaldees' (as if 'country of the Chaldees,' as LXX. of Gen. xi. 28).

[16] A new song is heard 'from the skirt of the earth,' viz. **Honour for the righteous!** i.e., splendid is the lot of the righteous' (see Sept.), the righteous being primarily the Jews (as in xxvi. 2)—not Jehovah, who is nowhere in O. T. simply called 'the righteous,' nor said to have honour or splendour, 'glory' being the word for Jehovah, 'honour' for the fairest of created things (see Del.)—much less 'the conqueror' (as Hilgenfeld, comparing Zech. ix. 9, but wrongly).——**We have heard . . . But I said**] In recording the bright side of his vision, the prophet had lost sight of himself, and become identified in feeling with the regenerate, 'righteous' community; but the interval of misery to be passed through before such blessedness can be reached wrings from him a cry as of personal pain, twice-repeated.——**Wasting away** (is) **for me!**] It would seem that he laments the sufferings actually undergone by the Jews in his own time, just as the Psalmist exclaims in the name of the pious Israelites, 'My flesh hath pined away, so that it hath no fatness' (Ps. cix. 24). Here, then, the prophecy refers not to the world's judgment-day as a whole, but to that single stage of it represented by a particular period in the history of the Jews (comp. on *v.* 3).——**The barbarous**] i.e., primarily the oppressors of the Jews, as xxxiii. 1.

upon thee, O inhabitant of the earth! [18] And it shall come to pass that whoso fleeth from the report of the terror shall fall into the pit; and whoso cometh up out of the midst of the pit shall be taken in the snare; for windows from the height have opened, and the earth's foundations do shake. [19] The earth is utterly broken; the earth is utterly shattered; the earth tottereth exceedingly; [20] the earth staggereth like a drunkard, and moveth to and fro like a hammock; and the rebellion thereof is heavy upon it, and it shall fall, and not rise again.

[21] And it shall come to pass in that day that Jehovah shall hold visitation upon the host of the height in the height, and upon the kings of the earth on the earth. [22] And they shall

[17. 18] The same language recurs with little variation in Jer. xlviii. 43, 44 (of Moab). The prophet is now occupied with the thought of the world-wide extent of the catastrophe. No sooner will one calamity be over, than another will come. If Babylon is punished to-day, the countries of the west will suffer to-morrow.——**For windows . . .**] Again has 'all flesh corrupted its way,' and again must 'all flesh be cut off' by a judgment not inferior to Noah's flood. Comp. Gen. vii. 11.

[19] The language here imitates the cracking and bursting, with which the present world shall pass away, for nothing less is the necessary close of the judgment, so far as the guilty parties are concerned (comp. *v.* 5).

[20] **Like a hammock**] Like a vineyard-watchman's deserted hammock, tossed to and fro by the storm, till at last it is swept far away.——**It shall fall**] We must remember that, according to the Hebrew cosmology (and it was no function of the prophets to correct this), 'the earth was immovable. Hence the destruction of the earth is described as its 'fall' (comp. xiii. 13). It is implied that there shall be a 'new heaven and a new earth.'

[21-23] 'Jehovah will overthrow the kings of the earth and their celestial patrons, and take the government into his own hands.'——**Will visit upon the host of the height**] 'The height' is a synonym for 'heaven' (see *v.* 18, xl. 26, lvii. 15), and the 'host of heaven' is a constant expression for either the angels (1 Kings xxii. 19) or the stars (Jer. xxxiii. 22). The meaning of the 'visitation' is obscure; but there is probably a parallel in Ps. lxxxii., where Bleek (and similarly Kosters) rightly understand the Elohim to be the patron-spirits of the nations, who are threatened with deprivation of their superhuman character, and death.[1] We have an early interpretation of the passage before us in Enoch xviii. 13–16 (with which comp. 2 Pet. ii. 4, Jude 6, Rev. xx. 2, 3): 'And horrible was that which I saw there; seven stars, like great burning mountains, and like spirits, which besought me. The angel said, This is the place where heaven and earth are at an end; it serves for

[1] Aben Ezra has already compared Dan. x. 13 (comp. *vv.* 20, 21), where the 'prince' or guardian-angel of Persia is said to withstand Michael, the guardian-angel of Israel (Dan. xii. 1); see also Sirach xvii. 14 (17), and Deut. xxxii. 8 LXX. ('he set the bounds of the nations *according to the number of the angels of God*').—With regard to Ps. lxxxii., see Kosters, *Theologisch Tijdschrift*, 1876, p. 125.

be gathered • as captives are gathered • into the pit, and shut up in the prison, and after many days they shall be visited. 23 And the moon shall be confounded, and the sun ashamed, for Jehovah Sabáoth hath become king in mount Zion and in Jerusalem, and before his elders shall be glory.

• See crit. note.

a prison for the stars of heaven and for the host of heaven. And the stars which roll upon the fire are those which transgressed the command of God before their rising, since they did not come in their appointed time. And he became wroth with them, and bound them unto the time when their guilt should be complete, in the year of the secret.' The Book of Job, too, contains dark allusions to struggles between Jehovah and the powers of heaven (see on xxvii. 1), and an elaborate Babylonian story, with a colouring of its own, is given by Mr. G. Smith (*Chaldean Genesis*, pp. 107–111). It is a singularly dark allusion which the prophet here makes to certain rebellious denizens of the upper regions, either stars or spirits, or rather both together, the celestial patrons of the nations of the world (comp. on xxxiv. 4). Whether these are to be imagined as seducing the earthly kings to evil (Del.), I cannot say; there is, at any rate, a mysterious relation between the fate of the heavenly and of the earthly powers, as there is between the fate of the angels and of the churches in Rev. i.–iii. 'All things are double, one against the other.'

22 **Pit**] i.e., dungeon. as Ex. xii. 29: the prophet probably means Sheól. In Enoch xviii. 14–16 the stars find a prison in space.—— **They shall be visited**] In a good or a bad sense? Authorities are divided. Jerome, Rashi, Vitr., Ges., lean to the sense of punishing; Pesh., Aben Ezra, Calv., Hitz., Ew., Del., to that of pardoning (as xxiii. 17; comp. 15). It is difficult, however, to see why there should be two punishments—unless, 'after the manner of men,' we suppose some treasonable plotting against Jehovah's government; and it is more in accordance with the analogy of prophecy that the vanquished kings should cast their crowns before the throne of God. We need not trouble ourselves about the meaning of the 'visitation,' as applied to the 'host of heaven.' For these were only mentioned because of their connection with the 'kings of the earth'—a connection which was only broken by the imprisonment of the latter. The kings when released will be no longer kings, but humble subjects. — This passage early excited the curiosity of Christian readers. It has contributed the release, as xxvii. 1 contributed the final destruction, of the 'dragon,' to the picture in Rev. xx. 1–10, and was considered by the Origenists (see Jerome *ad loc.*) to favour their opinion of the future salvation of the evil spirits.

23 **Hath become king**] It is the phrase for coming to the throne, 2 Sam. v. 4, 1 Kings xv. 1, &c. Hitherto Israel had been subject to 'other lords' (xxvi. 13), or at best to Jehovah's human representatives. —— **And before . . .**] The 'elders' are the representatives of the people (see on iii. 2). These shall be admitted to a direct intuition of the Divine glory, like the seventy elders of old (Ex. xxiv. 9, 10), and shall carry the reflection of it wherever they go (Ex. xxxiv. 29).

CHAPTER XXV.

THE judgment upon all the enemies of Jehovah having been consummated, the prophet in the name of believing Israel offers praise to God. The hymn reminds us of chap. xii.

[1] Jehovah! thou art my God; I will exalt thee, I will give thanks to thy name; for thou hast done wonderful things—far off counsels—perfect faithfulness. [2] For thou hast made a citadel into a heap, a fortified city into a ruin, a castle of foreigners to be no city, not to be built again. [3] Therefore fierce peoples glorify thee, cities of terrible nations fear thee; [4] for thou hast been a fortress to the weak, a fortress to the poor in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat; for the blast of the terrible ones was like a storm against a wall. [5] As heat in a parched land, thou subduest the uproar of foreigners; as heat by the shadow of clouds, the song of terrible ones is brought low.

[6] And Jehovah Sabáoth shall make unto all peoples in this mountain a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well-

[1] **Thou art my God . . .**] The prophet uses already consecrated expressions (or, conceivably, his expressions became consecrated). Ex. xv. 2, 11, Ps. cxviii. 28, cxlv. 1.——**Far off counsels**] Purposes eternally conceived (xxii. 11, xxxvii. 26); or, prophecies long since uttered ('counsellor,' xli. 28). The plural marks width of range.

[2] **Thou hast made . . .**] Not, I think, a mere generalisation from God's providential dealings (comp. Ps. cvii. 33), but either the mystic Babylon, which is yet to be revealed (virtually the view of Del.), or—which seems easier—the chief city of Israel's oppressors. Comp. xxiv. 10.

[3] The remnant of the oppressors of the Jews (comp. *v.* 4 *b*) shall be terrified into submission to Jehovah (comp. Rev. xi. 13); or, perhaps, nations like-minded with those may be referred to, comp. lix. 19.——**Fierce peoples**] The rend. is justified by the plural verb, and by the plural noun in the parallel line.

[4] **Against a wall**] Lit., of a wall. I doubt if this phrase can be correct. It is almost too concise to be intelligible, and if correctly explained (as e.g. by Del.), 'beating vainly against a wall,' scarcely suits the context. It is the violence, not the ineffectualness, of the attack which needs emphasising.

[6] **In this mountain**] Mount Zion (xxiv. 23), where the author dwells.——**Unto all peoples**] Members of all nations, therefore, will be incorporated into the people of Jehovah (comp. Matt. viii. 11), and enjoy its privileges. Fear in their case will pass into grateful love.——**A feast of fat things**] An image of the highest spiritual and temporal blessings (see on lv. i.), not improbably suggested by the sacrificial meal connected with the Shélem (thank- or peace-offering), as Ps. xxii. 26, 29. According to

strained. [7] And he shall annihilate in this mountain the covering which covereth all peoples, and the web which is woven over all nations; [8] he shall annihilate death for ever, and the Lord Jehovah shall wipe away tears from off all faces, and the reproach of his people shall he take away from off all the earth; for Jehovah hath spoken it. [9] And they

the Mosaic law the fat pieces of the victim were to be devoted to Jehovah immediately by burning, and the next best piece. the breast, mediately by giving it to His servants the priests (Lev. vii. 31); and the Messianic prophecy, Jer. xxxi. 14, is in substantial harmony with this arrangement. In this case it is presupposed that the offerer of the Shélem is the host, and Jehovah the guest (Oehler, *O. Test. Theology*, ii. 8). But in the coming age, our author seems to imply, God Himself will be the host, and all—priests and laity alike—will be His guests, and receive the choicest gifts: He will require no sacrifice but a broken heart. A similar image occurs in *Pirke Abhoth*, iii. 16, iv 16. In the latter passage, the present age (*'ôlām*, αἰὼν) is described as 'the vestibule' leading to the *triclinium* or banquet-hall, i.e., the age to come. The Messianic age was to be unending, and so too it is implied here that the feast will be (see *v.* 8). —To understand the full force of the image of the Shélem we must remember that the meal which followed the sacrifice was a highly festive occasion. True, the eucharistic meals of the Jews, like those of the early Christians (1 Cor. xi. 21) often degenerated into sensual merrymakings (1 Sam. i. 13, where Eli suspects Hannah of being drunk after a sacrificial meal, comp. *v.* 10; so too Prov. vii. 14–18), but moderate enjoyment was a duty (Deut. xii. 7). Obs. There is no analogy to this form of belief in Zoroastrianism.

[7] **The covering . . . nations**] 'A net (i.e., mortality) is spread over all the living,' *Pirke Abhoth*, iii. 16; comp. next verse. David 'wept as he went up, and had his head covered' (a sign of mourning), 2 Sam. xv. 30. 'Your (spiritual) eyes hath he closed, and your heads hath he covered,' Isa. xxix. 10. All these are in point, and we must not specialise too much. All 'darkness,' whether without or within, intercepts the 'light of Jehovah:' especially death, for, from the old Hebrew point of view, 'in Death no man remembereth thee.' Comp. 2 Tim. i. 10, where death is described as a power or principle which overshadowed the world, till Jesus Christ 'abolished death and brought life and immortality to light.'——**Annihilate death**] The promise belongs not only to the Jewish nation (as Hos. xiii. 14) as a community, but to all its believing individual members: this is a necessary inference from the individualising reference of the next clause ('. . . from off all faces'). Comp. on xxvi. 14. It is a different prospect which is held out for the citizens of the new Jerusalem in lxv. 20. But even there the death which is still the portion of believers has completely lost its sorrowful associations. It is only to the wicked that it will be a curse. But why does the prophet add, **He shall wipe away tears**? What place is left for tears? Perhaps he remembers those to whom death comes as a blessing, who, as Job (iii. 21) and Dante (*Inf.* iii. 46) tell us, have the 'longing and the 'hope' of death. He concludes with a special promise for the Jews, who, in their world-wide dispersion (comp. Joel iii. 2), were nowhere secure from the taunt, Where is thy God? (Ps. lxxix. 10). This **reproach of his people shall he take away**.

shall say in that day, Behold, here is our God, for whom we have waited that he should save us; here is Jehovah, for whom we have waited; let us exult and rejoice in his salvation. [10] For the hand of Jehovah, shall rest upon this mountain, and Moab shall be trampled down in his place, as straw is trampled down in the water of a dung-pit; [11] and [a] he shall spread out his hands within it, as a swimmer spreadeth out (his hands) to swim, but he shall abase his [a] pride together with the artifices of his hands. [12] And the fortifications of thy lofty walls shall he cast down, abase, and bring to the ground, even to the dust.

CHAPTER XXVI.

FUTURE glory, and the discipline by which it is obtained.

[1] In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah:

[a] (God) . . . . its, Targ., Aben Ezra, Vitr., Kay.

[9] A brief strain from the hymn of the redeemed.

[10-12] A contrast. The happy state of the Jews is resumed in the words, **For on this mountain shall the hand of Jehovah rest**—protectingly (xi. 2) for his people, but vengefully for his enemies. True, the mightiest of these have been destroyed, but the petty foes of the Jews were regarded with intensified hatred. Hence the declaration, in a contemptuous figure drawn from common life, that Moab **shall be trampled down in his place**. The latter words are not merely expletive; they imply that Moab cannot possibly escape (Del.). Is there a historical background to this? Probably, though we are not able to determine it with precision. There are, it is true, some evidences of a friendly intercourse with Moab in the post-Isaianic period (Jer. xxvii. 3, xl. 11). But, on the other hand, we are told that bands of Moabites ravaged Judah during the reign of Jehoiakim (2 Kings xxiv. 2), and Moab is accused of maliciously triumphing at the ruin of their neighbours, Ezek. xxv. 8–11. Sanballat, too, was probably a Moabite (see on xv. 5).——**Dung-pit**] Hebr. *madménah*; perhaps an allusion to the local name Madmen, Jer. xlviii. 2.

[11] Moab shall **spread out his hands**, to prevent himself from sinking in the water. (Vitr. and Dr. Kay, with Targ., A. E., &c., make Jehovah the subject. The image will then be analogous to that of 'riding on the high places,' but does not harmonise with the figure in *v.* 10).——**His pride**] Comp. on xvi. 6.——**Artifices**] Yet I rather doubt whether 'snares' can be so paraphrased. Is the text right?

[12] **The fortifications**] Most explain this of Kir Moab, or of the cities of Moab in general; Vitr. and Ges., of Babylon. I think it refers at any rate to the 'city' mentioned in xxiv. 10–12, xxv. 2, and especially (note the expressions) xxvi. 5. It is possible that the verse is misplaced.

[1, 2] A third hymn. The picture is purely ideal. The new Jerusa-

'A city of strength is ours; salvation doth he appoint for walls and outworks: [2] open ye the gates, that a righteous nation, that keepeth faithfulness, may enter in.' [3a] A purpose established thou purposest—[a] peace, peace, for in thee is his trust. [4] Trust ye in Jehovah for ever, for in Jah Jehovah ye have a Rock of Ages. [5] For he hath cast down those who dwelt on high, the lofty city; he hath abased it, he hath abased it to the earth; he hath brought it even to the dust. [6] The foot trode it down, even the feet of the afflicted, the steps of the weak. [7] The path for the righteous is plain; thou

[a] A stedfast mind thou keepest in, Del., Kay.—Firm is the hope; thou wilt form, Ew.

lem has no need of walls, and yet there is a mention of gates; it is already rebuilt, and yet there is an invitation to those who are to inhabit it (Reuss). Ewald, it is true, thinks the gates are those of the temple (as Ps. cxviii. 19, 20), but there is the same (as I venture to think) happy inconsistency in lx. 11, 18.——**Salvation**] See note on xii. 2.

[2] **Open ye the gates . . .**] The call proceeds from heaven, comp. xl. 1-6. Of Jehovah himself we read that he 'observeth faithfulness' (Ps. xxxi. 23, Del.).

[3] **A purpose established**] 'Faithful is the saying' (1 Tim. i. 15). 'All his commandments are true; they are established (*same word*) for ever and ever' (Ps. cxi. 7, 8). 'For I know the thoughts which I think concerning you . . . thoughts of peace' (Jer. xxix. 11). Obs., throughout this first paragraph (*vv.* 1-4), the writer's mind is running on the security and immovableness of the new Jerusalem. This thread of thought is to some extent broken by alt. rendering, which has, however, in its favour the (only) apparent parallel of Ps. cxii. 7, 8, 'His heart is fixed, trusting in Jehovah: Established is his heart, he shall not be afraid.' The other passage sometimes quoted in its support is Phil. iv. 7, where A. V. has 'The peace of God . . . shall keep your hearts and minds,' but νοήματα is rather 'purposes' (Ellicott, Alford). It may tempt some to compare the use of the word *yétser* in later Hebrew, in which it is sometimes used synonymously with *lêb*, a heart. But its proper meaning in such passages, which is almost always suitable, is 'impulse, desire.'——For **purposest** some would render 'keepest,' supposing a play on the two meanings of the verb—'keep' and 'frame'; this implies a violent rendering of the first two words,—'Well-founded is the thought' (Calv., Hitz.).——**Peace, peace**] He refrains from epithets. Such peace is indescribable:—so lvii. 19.

[4] **In Jah Jehovah . . .**] The sacred name is reduplicated (as perhaps in xii. 2, but see note) to express its perfection, like 'peace, peace' in *v.* 3. For the form of the phrase, comp. Korán iv. 47 'in God there is a sufficient patron.'

[5] 'Rock' is a Divine title (xxx. 29). As a proof of Jehovah's right to it in all its manifold significance, the prophet points to the fate of the imperial city (as in xxiv.). Obs., the increased rapidity of movement in the style.——**The feet of the afflicted**] i.e., of God's people. The same word in Hebr. expresses poverty and humble-mindedness (the supposed distinction between *'ánî* and *'ánāv* cannot be made out); the same word, plainness or straightness, and uprightness.

[7] Jehovah who tolerates no obstacle on his own pathway (xl. 3, 4), will suffer none on that of his people. A **plain path** is theirs, free from trouble without and

makest plain with a level the path of the righteous. [8] Yea, in the path of thy judgments, Jehovah! we waited for thee; for thy name and for thy memorial there was heartfelt desire. [9] With my soul I desired thee in the night; yea, with my spirit within me I sought thee earnestly; for as soon as thy judgments come upon the earth, the inhabitants of the world will learn righteousness. [10] If the wicked be treated favourably, he learneth not righteousness; in a land of rectitude he dealeth unjustly, and hath no eye for the majesty of Jehovah. [11] Jehovah! thy hand hath been lifted up, (but) they saw it not; they shall see—and be ashamed—the jealousy for the

within. This is expressed in the style of the Proverbs; see *Q. P. B.* Prov. iii. 6, xi. 5, xv. 19, and the Hebr. of Prov. v. 6.——**With a level**] i.e., exactly, to a nicety.

[8] Again the lyric tone. The Church is the speaker. 'Indeed, knowing this—that thou hadst a hatred of all that exalted itself, we looked out for thee to traverse the earth in **the path of thy judgments**, those judgments which, according to the prophets, were to open the Messianic period.——**For thy name**] i.e., almost 'for thy manifestation,' but 'name' means not so much an act of self-manifestation as that side of the Divine Being which is turned towards man (comp. Ps. xx. 1, and see on xxx. 27, lxiii. 9). The term is common as a Divine title to Hebrew and Phœnician: comp. 'Astarte, name of Baal,' *Inscr. of Eshmunazar* (ed. Schlottmann), vii. 9.——**Memorial**] a synonym for name (so also in Assyrian), Ex. iii. 15, Ps. cxxxv. 13, comp. Hos. xii. 5,

[9] **Soul . . . spirit**] On the distinction, see Oehler, *Old Test. Theology*, i. 216–220.——**As soon as . . .**] It was not, then, merely a selfish patriotism which moved the prophet, but a genuine interest in 'righteousness.' But this does not exhaust the meaning of the passage. It is the Messianic hope which we have before us. The spread of righteousness over the earth is connected with the coming of Jehovah to 'reign on mount Zion' (xxiv. 23), and this advent is to be ushered in by a series of judgments on the unbelievers and unrighteous. 'Righteous' = a worshipper of Jehovah; 'unrighteous' virtually = heathen, see Del. on Ps. cxxv. 3. Notice two indications of the point of time at which the author places himself: 1. The Jews are in constant intercourse with the heathen; 2. They suffer, not merely by their political subjugation (*v.* 13), but by the moral gulf between themselves and the heathen. Compare p. 137.

[10] The thought of *v.* 9 is enforced. If judgment be withheld, the ungodly will not 'learn righteousness.'——**A land of rectitude**] i.e., a place where the upright dwell. Ps. cxliii. 10 is not a parallel passage.

[11] **Hath been lifted up**] viz., against the enemies of Israel (comp. Ex. vi. 1).——**But they saw it not**] 'See' has two meanings, 'to see' with the eyes, and 'to feel' with the whole nature. Both are united here: 'they saw it not,' because 'they felt it not,' not being the objects of those Divine judgments. —— **Jealousy for the people**] So 'the zeal of thy house' (Ps. lxix. 9, A. V.) should be 'jealousy for thy house.' The clause means more exactly, They shall see what jealousy for a people (bound, as Israel is, to its God), means. ——**Fire**] 'Shall thy jealousy burn like fire'? Ps. lxxix. 5, comp. Zeph.

people; yea, [b] fire shall devour thine adversaries.[b] [12] Jehovah! thou wilt stablish peace for us, for all our work also thou hast wrought for us. [13] Jehovah our God! other lords beside thee have had dominion over us; only through thee do we celebrate thy name. [14] The dead live not (again), the shades rise not; therefore thou hast visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish. [15] Thou hast increased the nation, Jehovah! thou hast increased the nation; thou hast won for thyself glory; thou hast made distant all the boundaries of the land. [16] Jehovah! in trouble they looked for

[b] Let the fire of thine enemies devour them, Ew.

i. 18. Ewald strangely compares 2 Kings i. 10. Alt. rend. means, 'the fire with which thou punishest thy enemies.' But the analogy of 'jealousy for the people' now decides me against it. The construction adopted is, however, uncommon and harsh (see Knobel). —— **Our work**] The work of our deliverance. —— **For us**] The same thought is expressed in Ps. xc. 16, 17, where 'thy deed' = 'the work of our hands.'—In this and the next two verses, the prophet assumes the liberation of the Jews to have been accomplished.

[13] **Other lords**] Jehovah was the rightful 'lord' of Israel (comp. lxiii. 19); Nineveh and Babylon had usurped his place. Another view (Hitz., Oehler) is that 'lords' = gods. This involves interpreting 'the dead' in *v.* 14 of the generation of idolatrous Jews. In its favour may be urged the further light which the passage will then throw on the prophet's belief in the Resurrection. In *v.* 19 he exclaims, 'Thy dead (O Jehovah) shall arise,' i.e., the believing Israelites shall return to life, and help to people the regenerate earth. In *v.* 14 he prepares the way for this by excluding unbelievers from a share in the future bliss. On the ordinary explanation, the outburst of faith in *v.* 19 is a little abrupt, and revelation does not disdain those psychological processes by which the mind is fitted for fresh intuitions of Divine truth. Still I do not see how *v.* 14 can fairly be interpreted as Oehler (*Old Test. Theology*, ii. 393) proposes, and (unless by violent means) the latter half of *v.* 13 is incapable of being reconciled with his view. —— **Only through thee**] Only through thine interposition. Comp. Ps. lvi. 4, 10. —— **Celebrate**] The word may mean no more than 'invoke' (Ex. xxiii. 13), but more probably it implies thanksgiving for a benefit received, as Ps. xlv. 17 (18). Of course a mere invocation of Jehovah was possible during the exile.

[14. 15] A sudden flight into the prophetic future. All foreign lords have passed away; they are in the realm of the shades, from which—except by a miracle—none returns (Job xvi. 22); their very memory has perished. Comp. xiv. 22, Jer. li. 39. Meantime Jehovah has increased the population of Judah, and widely extended its borders. In fact, the territory occupied at first by the restored exiles was extremely limited; the ideal was still in the future. —— **Therefore**] i.e., with this result. Hebrew cannot clearly distinguish between that which merely contributes to a result and that which is worked purposely for that result: it has no word for 'consequently.' Comp. Winer, *New Test. Gram.*, pp. 573–4, but obs. that this idiom occurs in some passages in which a theistic teleology cannot be traced.

[16-18] The prophet returns to the gloomy past and present. ——

thee ; they [c] poured out prayers (?),[c] when thy chastening came to them. [17] As she who is with child, and near her delivery, writhes, and cries out in her pangs, such were we because of thee, Jehovah ! [18] We were with child, we writhed, we brought forth as it were wind ; we made not the land salvation, neither were inhabitants of the world produced. [19] [d] Thy dead shall live ; my dead bodies shall arise.[d] Awake and cry

[c] See below.

[d] Let thy dead . . . . Ew.

Looked for thee] Or, remembered thee. —— **Poured out prayers**] The rendering is doubtful, and the text has the appearance of corruptness. LXX. has 'in small affliction (was) thy discipline unto us.' Altering a point, Böttcher renders the present text, 'affliction (was) the charm of thy discipline for them,' i.e., affliction acted like a charm by bringing them back under thy discipline. This, indeed, is not free from difficulty, but 'affliction' is probably the meaning of the first word, rendered above 'they poured out.' 'Charm' (for this, not 'prayers,' is the primary meaning of the second word) can hardly be right ; unless (assuming the late origin of the prophecy) the old word for 'charm' (iii. 3), or amulet (iii. 20), acquired some new meaning in the religion of the Captivity, possibly not unconnected with the Babylonian incantations. For not even a prophet can disengage himself from the phraseology and mental imagery of his age. The ordinary rendering 'whispered prayers' seems to me now unsuitable. In the next verse, the Jews are represented as crying out vehemently, and such, too, is the language of those Psalms which seem to express the feelings of the exiles.

[17] **As a woman with child**] A figure for intense anxiety (as xiii. 8, xxi. 3). Contrast another figurative description, 'Before she travailed, she brought forth' (lxvi. 7). ——**Because of thee**] i.e., because of thy hand (Jer. xv. 17).

[18] **Wind**] i.e., that which was futile and useless (xli. 29). Or there may be an allusion to apparent pregnancy, and its result (*empneumatosis*).——**Salvation**] i.e., safe, prosperous. The following clause expresses the disappointment of the later Jews at the scanty population of Judea. I must again remark that the real or assumed standing-ground of the author is the period after the return from exile. —— **Inhabitants of the world**] Perhaps this certainly strange expression alludes to the preeminent position soon to be enjoyed by the regenerate Israel in a regenerate world.——**Were . . . produced**] Lit., fell :—a unique expression for being born (see, however, Wisd. vii. 3, and comp. the use of *πίπτω* and Arab. *saqata*, Ges.). We do meet (e.g., Job iii. 16), with the substantive 'that which falls' (*néfel*) for 'a birth,' but only in the sense of an 'untimely birth.' The prophet selects the term to express the abnormal and violent character of this second birth of the deceased Israelites (see next verse). So Oehler, *Old Test. Theology*, ii. 396.

[19] **Shall live**] i.e., live again. The late Hebrew for the Resurrection is *t'khiyyath hammēthim*, 'the revival of the dead.' 'Sublimely recovering himself, the prophet cries that God's saints, though they are dead, shall live' (M. Arnold), and shall share the duties and the privileges of regenerate Israel. The passage has a strong affinity to Hos. vi. 2 : 'After two days will he revive us; on the third day he will raise us up, and we shall live in his sight,' and Ezek. xxxvii.

for joy, ye dwellers in the dust, for a dew of *lights is thy dew, and the earth shall produce the shades. 20 Go, my

* Herbs, Kimchi, Vitr.

1–10 (the 'dry bones'). The three passages agree in connecting the Resurrection with the circumstances of the Jewish community. This is very clear in Hosea and Ezekiel, but is hardly less certain in the passage before us. It is as 'my dead body' (or, 'the part of me that has faded and fallen off me') that the departed Israelites are summoned from the Underworld. The difference is that the descriptions in Hosea and Ezekiel are allegorical (comp. Hos. vi. 1, Ezek. xxxvi. 27, xxxvii. 11–14), whereas the whole context of our passage (especially *v.* 14) shows that the language of the writer is to be taken literally. It is in fact an expression of faith in a resurrection, though in a resurrection as exceptional as those of which we read in the Books of Kings. On the question of the relation of the Biblical doctrine of the Resurrection to the Zoroastrian, I have spoken elsewhere (*I. C. A.*, p. 130). I will only add, that we must not quote the covert opposition to Dualism which most critics find in xlv. 7 (see however note) as conclusive against the origination of the doctrine of the Resurrection in Persia. For the doctrine of Dualism is plainly inconsistent with Monotheism; that of the Resurrection is not. (Comp. Geiger, *Jüd. Zeitschrift*, 1872, p. 270). Why moreover hunt for Persian affinities? The Babylonians too believed in the Resurrection; they ascribed it to the favour of Marduk, who (as a solar deity), himself died and rose again. See Hymn to Marduk, Lenormant, *Les premières civilisations*, ii. 177–8. I do not, of course, dream of claiming a Babylonian origin for the doctrine. Psychologically speaking, the revelation of it to the Israelites was prepared for by their earnest belief in retribution. Rewards and punishments for good and evil conduct being so imperfectly awarded in this life, faith inferred a second, and life to be complete required a body. Besides, the vague and incidental character of the reference in this passage is of itself a warrant of its underived origin. And now to return to the prophet. If the reader has any further doubt as to the meaning of the passage, let him refer to lxvi. 7–9, Ezek. xxxvi. 38, which prove how much the prophetic writers dwelt on the question of the repopulation of the sacred territory. Comp. also Prof. Drummond's remarks, *The Jewish Messiah*, p. 361.——**Awake and cry**] Lively faith anticipating the event. ——**Thy dew . . .**] The 'dew' here corresponds to the life-giving 'wind' in Ezek. xxxvii., as the 'dead bodies' here to the 'dry bones' there. The figure may be expanded thus:—The vivifying energy of Jehovah is like dew—not the common dew, but 'dew of lights,' i.e., the essential, supernal light (comp. James i. 17, Del.), which, according to the primitive belief, Hebrew, Egyptian, Persian, Indian, existed before the sun (see Gen. i. 3, Job xxxviii. 19, xxv. 3, and comp. art. 'Cosmogony,' *Encyclop. Britannica*, new ed.). Light and life are correlative ideas—Ps. xxxvi. 9, Job iii. 16–20, John i. 4; but light is a more pictorial expression, and a more suitable companion for dew. The prophet means to say, 'Thy dew, O Jehovah, is so full of the light of life that it even draws forth the shades from the dark womb of the underworld.' Alt. rend. means 'a dew like that which falls upon plants'; comp. Hos. xiv. 5, Ps. lxxii. 6. ——**The earth shall produce**] Lit., cause to fall (comp. *v.* 18). The earth is likened to a devouring monster, Num. xiii. 32, Ezek. xxxvi. 13, like Sheól (see on v. 14).

people, into thy chambers, and shut thy door behind thee; hide thyself for a little moment, until the indignation shall have passed by. [21] For behold, Jehovah cometh out of his place to visit the guilt of the earth's inhabitants upon them; and the earth shall disclose her bloodshed, and shall no more cover her slain.

CHAPTER XXVII.

[1] In that day shall Jehovah visit with his sword, the hard, and great, and strong, the leviathan the fugitive serpent, and

[20] The rapture is over, and the prophet returns to the sober present. He has gained on behalf of his people the comforting certitude that a great exhibition of the Divine justice is on the point of taking place; and his counsel is to withdraw from the doomed world into the privacy of communion with God (Ps. xxvii. 5, Ps. xxxi. 21, Del.). For even the righteous man shall only 'live in virtue of his trust' in Jehovah (Hab. ii. 4?)—— **For a little moment . . .**] Parallel passage, x. 25.

[21] **For behold, &c.**] The same expressions in Mic. i. 3.——**Shall disclose . . . her slain**] The latter clause by itself might be taken as a prediction of a resurrection; but, with the words which precede it, it can only be taken as a strong expression for the inner necessity of vengeance for blood. Comp. Gen. iv. 11, Job xvi. 18. A fine application in Macaulay, vii. 33 (field of Landen). The whole stress of the verse lies on the punishment of the actually existing inhabitants of the earth.—The description of the judgment follows in the next chapter.

[1] Further details on 'that day,' expressed, with the fearless security characteristic of the prophets, in phraseology of mythic origin. The object is to throw into relief the terribleness of Jehovah's vengeance; this is effected by clothing the announcement in language originally used of the storm-cloud. The **sword** of Jehovah (xxxi. 8, xxxiv. 5, lxvi. 16, Deut. xxxii. 41, 42, Jer. l. 35–38, Judg. vii. 20, comp. Josh. v. 13) is described more fully in Gen. iii. 24 as the 'turning sword by the cherubim,' and the cherub is undoubtedly a symbol taken from the storm-cloud (see *Encycl. Brit.*, art. 'Cherubim'). The Babylonians had their parallel in the sword of fifty points belonging to the god Marduk, who was originally solar (see quotation in Lenormant, *La Magie*, pp. 151–2). Both obviously mean the lightning, and belong to a stage prior to Biblical religion (comp. Rom. i. 19)—there was no danger, in such a context, of the prophet's being misunderstood. The other imagery of the verse is also of mythic origin. The best commentary upon it is two verses of Job (xxvi. 12, 13):—

> By his power he hath stirred up the sea,
> And by his skill he hath smitten Rahab;
> By his breath the heavens become serene,
> His hand hath pierced through the flying serpent.

Rahab in the second line is synonymous with the cloud- or storm-dragon:—this is certain both from its being placed parallel with 'the flying serpent' in line 4, and from Isa. li. 9 (see note). It is hardly less certain that 'the sea' in the first line is the upper ocean or æther (Job ix. 8, Ps. xxxiii. 7, comp. Job xxvi. 8), above which Jehovah sitteth (Ps. civ. 3); otherwise the first line will be inconsistent with the rest (comp. also Ps. lxxxix. 9, 10).

the leviathan the wreathed serpent, and he shall slay the dragon in the sea. 2 In that day—'[a]A pleasant vineyard[a]—sing ye of it. 3 I Jehovah its keeper—moment by moment I water it; lest any should invade it, by night and by day I

[a] So Sept., Targ. (?), some Hebr. MSS., Lowth, Ew., Del., Naeg.—A vineyard of foaming wine. Hebr. text.

So here in Isa. xxvii. The two leviathans, or 'coilers,' and the dragon, are a mythic personification of clouds and darkness, the enemy of the sun and of light. And the prophet means to say that just as Jehovah is supreme in the physical heaven, and keeps the sky-dragon, that is, the cold and cheerless darkness, within bounds, so He is supreme in the moral heaven, and prevents 'the prince of the power of the air'—the personification of evil and of unbelief—from going beyond his permitted work (Job i. 12). Perhaps, too, he means to say that there is a connection between these physical, or physico-moral, and moral spheres of rebellion, just as in xxiv. 21 the Divine visitation is held upon the host of the heavenly patronisers and the host of the earthly patronised.—Most critics think that three particular kingdoms are referred to under these symbolic phrases—Assyria, Babylon, and Egypt, or Egypt, Assyria, and Tyre, or Media, Persia, and Egypt. It is true, the dragon is elsewhere an emblem of Egypt (li. 9, Ezek. xxix. 3, xxxii. 2, comp. Ps. lxviii. 30); once, too, the dragons in the plural, but so also, and in the very same passage, is the leviathan (Ps. lxxiv. 13, 14). If anyone chooses, therefore, to say that all three phrases mean Egypt, he cannot be refuted; and yet I think it is safer, considering xxiv. 21, not to limit the number of the hostile kingdoms either to one or to three. The number is perhaps chosen to correspond to the triple description of the sword of Jehovah at the beginning of the verse. —— **Hard**] i.e., well-tempered ('cruel,' as Gen. xlix. 7, suits the context less).

2 Here the bright side of the judgment begins:—Israel is received back into favour. Prophecy passes into song. Possibly the words 'shall this song be sung' have fallen out, and yet it may be urged that the abbreviation of the opening formula is in harmony with the general abruptness of the section. This abruptness of style makes the work of exposition very difficult. The first verse of the song, no doubt, is clear. Jehovah is the speaker; he declares that he will in person be the guardian of his vineyard. But *v.* 4, at any rate the first clause of it, seems very loosely connected; indeed, it evidently introduces a new cycle of ideas. Then again the second and following clauses seem hardly consistent with the first:—no wrath, and yet a hostile aggression on the part of Jehovah! Then, in *v.* 5, protection and peace are offered to certain persons, apparently to the same who are indicated by the phrase 'thorns and briars.' And yet elsewhere 'thorns' are the symbols of an obstinacy destined for destruction (comp. x. 17, xxxiii. 12, 2 Sam. xxiii. 6, 7, Nah. i. 10). Lowth evades the difficulty by rendering in *v.* 1 'sing ye a responsive song' (comp. Ex. xv. 21: same verb apparently, but different conjugation); reading 'wall' instead of 'wrath' in *v.* 4, and distributing the song antiphonally—an attractive theory, but not entirely consistent with the present text. Drechsler regards the song as the counterpart of the song and oracle in v. 1–7. 'There the Lord pronounced a judgment of rejection upon Israel, using the figure of the vineyard; in our passage he declares that he receives

keep it. [4] [b]Wrath have I none[b]; may I but have briars and thorns before me! with war will I stride against them, I will burn them up together; [5] or else let him seize upon my fortress, (and) make peace with me, let him make with me peace.' [6] In (days) to come Jacob shall take root, Israel shall blossom and bud, and they shall fill the face of the world with fruit.

[7] Hath He smitten him as He smote his smiter? or was he slain as his [c]slayers were slain? [8] [d]In exact measure[d], when dismissing her, thou didst contend with her; he scared

[b] I have no wall [speech of the vineyard], Sept., Pesh., Lowth, Grätz.
[c] So Sept., Pesh., Lowth, Ew.—Slain ones. Hebr. points.
[d] So Ges., Del., Naeg., Kay.—By driving her away, Hitz., Ew.

his people back, and takes the parable of the vineyard for his theme.' This view seems to me correct; it enables us to give a reasonable exegesis, though it does not entirely remove the suspicion that the present text may contain some errors. ——**Wrath have I none**, if the true reading, will mean, 'I have no longer any wrath;' the **thorns and briars** will be those referred to in v. 6, only that what is there an unexplained detail of the parable has here become a speaking figure for the hostile peoples, which, like parasitical plants, have overrun God's heritage. There is therefore a combined reference to v. 6 and x. 17.

[5] **Or else . . . .**] A truly evangelical belief that God is willing to be reconciled even to His enemies. Its presence here gives the prophecy a spiritual superiority over the other prophetic descriptions of the judgment upon the hostile nations, e.g., lxvi. 16. Even according to xix. 22 Egypt must be first smitten in order that it may be healed.——**Seize upon my fortress**] Let him take sanctuary in the Name of Jehovah, which is 'a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe' (Prov. xviii. 10); in short, let him become a believing servant of Jehovah. 'Fortress,' a symbolical name for a protecting deity, as xvii. 10, Ps. lii. 7 (9).

[6] Israel likened to a colossal tree, 'the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations' (Rev. xxii. 2), i.e. the blessing of salvation (*yeshū'ah*) shall extend to the whole world (the 'new earth'?). Partly parallel, xxxvii. 31, Hos. xiv. 6.

[7, 8] The prophet returns to the point of view adopted at xxvi. 8. He reminds his people of the moderation with which Jehovah has treated them. Their punishment, however painful, was not so severe as that of their enemies. ——**His smiter**] Comp. x. 20.——**His slayers**] No critic can be surprised at the misplacing of a Vâv. The received reading is most obscure. It ought to mean the slain Israelites, but this is clearly against the context; so the commentators perforce explain it of the enemies of the theocracy, slain either by Jehovah (Del.) or by Israel (Knob., Naeg., &c.).

[8] **In exact measure**] 'Dealing out punishment in carefully adjusted quantities' (Kay). Lit., in a seah, a seah; a *seah* is ⅓ of an ephah (see on v. 10), and therefore a very small measure. A singular phrase, and perhaps corrupt; comp. for the form of the Hebr., *kav-kāv*, xviii. 2. Alt. rend. seems to me now precarious; see, however, *Notes and*

her away with his rough blast in the day of the east wind.
9 Therefore •on these terms• shall the guilt of Jacob be purged,
and this shall be all the fruit of taking away his sin, when he
maketh all the altar-stones like lime-stones dashed in pieces,
that Ashérahs and sun-images rise up no more. 10 For the
fortified city ᶠshall beᶠ solitary, a homestead dismissed and
deserted as the wilderness; there shall the calf feed, and there
lie down, and browse upon the branches thereof. 11 When its
twigs are dry, they shall be broken off; women shall come and
set them on a blaze: for it is not a people of understanding;
therefore he who made it hath no compassion upon it, and he
who formed it showeth it no favour. 12 And it shall come to

• So Riehm.—Hereby, Ges., Ew., Del., &c. ᶠ Or, is.

Criticisms, p. 29.——**In the day of the east wind**] A figure for a national catastrophe, the east wind being a violently tempestuous one, comp. Ps. xlviii. 7, Ezek. xxvii. 26, and especially Hos. xiii. 15.

9 An inference from the Divine moderation. Jehovah has only banished, nòt destroyed, his people, consequently repentance is still possible, and Jehovah will mercifully accept this repentance as an atonement for guilt.——**On these terms**] viz. of destroying the emblems of idolatry. Rend. as in Gen. xxxiv. 15, 22, 1 Sam. xi. 2 (Riehm). Alt. rend. seems hardly in accordance with prophetic theology (see on xxii. 14), at least if 'hereby' means 'by undergoing his punishment of captivity.' The next clause is difficult: we should expect, 'And the putting away of his sin is entirely the fruit of this.' But there is a meaning in this violation of the parallelism. In one sense (i.e., from a human point of view) Israel's repentance was the cause; in another (i.e., from a divine point of view) it was the result, of his forgiveness. Justice and mercy are combined in the removal of guilt, according to the Old Test. as well as the New. Obs., too, that 'guilt' and 'sin' are parallel, as in v. 18.——**That Ashérahs . . .**] The mention of the symbols of Ashérah (see on xvii. 8) is not what we should expect from a writer living during the Babylonian exile. The phenomenon is, of course, not decisive of the critical question at issue, but ought to have its due weight.

10 Very different meantime shall be the fate of the world's metropolis. Its fortifications shall be razed; its population 'dismissed' (into exile or to Sheól); its only visitors pasturing flocks, and women in search of wood. Calv., Ges., Del., Knob., think **the fortified city** is Jerusalem, but surely the context is against this view. It is true that the Jews are said to be without knowledge in i. 3, and that Jehovah is their 'former' (xliii. 1), but the same things are said of the heathen (xliv. 17, Ps. lxxxvi. 9). The irremediableness of the ruin, expressed analogically by the 'unmercifulness' of Jehovah certainly suits a great heathen city better than Jerusalem:—Jon. iv. 11, stands unique in the Old Test.——**Dismissed**] i.e., deprived of its inhabitants.

11 **Its twigs**] i.e., those of the bushes which will grow up wild on the site of the now levelled city (comp. vii. 25). A striking contrast to the parks and gardens which an Oriental city enclosed within its limits.—For the suppression of the noun of the genitive, comp. v. 14.

pass in that day, that Jehovah shall beat out corn from the [g]swelling stream[g] of the River unto the torrent of Egypt, and ye shall be gathered one by one, ye children of Israel. [13] And it shall come to pass in that day that a great trumpet shall be blown; and those shall come who were lost in the land of Assyria, and outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship Jehovah, in the holy mountain, in Jerusalem.

[g] Or, ear. (A subtle allusion to the double meaning.)

[12, 13] A concluding prophecy of comfort. Here again there are great difficulties of interpretation. The point of view assumed in the rest of the chapter is in the midst of a period of exile — as most critics believe, the Babylonian exile. But the point of view in these two verses is that of Isaiah, in whose time Assyria and Egypt were Israel's principal foes, and who distinctly anticipates that when Jehovah interposes 'the second time' his people will be dispersed chiefly in Assyria and Egypt. I venture to hold confidently that these verses must be explained entirely on the analogy of xi. 11–16.—Del. and Ges. however think that the Euphrates and the Wady el-'Arîsh are here the extreme boundaries of the promised land of Israel (Gen. xv. 18, 1 Kings viii. 65), and that the passage means that Jehovah will people the kingdom in its fullest extent as rapidly and numerously as berries fall from the olive-trees.——**A great trumpet**] The same signal for a Divine interposition as in xviii. 3, comp. xi. 12, Matt. xxiv. 31.——**Outcasts**] Same phrase as in xi. 12.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A GLANCE at the sad fate of Samaria, followed by an invective against the frivolity, perversity, and superstition of the ruling classes of Judah, and closed by a gentle, serious, parabolic address to believers. The chapter divides naturally at *v.* 14 and *v.* 23. It must be taken in connection with the four, if not five, following chapters, which were probably circulated together among the disciples and adherents of Isaiah as a separate work. It is true, they have no heading, but their Isaianic origin, and, in spite of some slight differences in the chronological data, their close connection, cannot for a moment be called in question. They were evidently delivered at various stages of the Assyrian intervention under Sargon (see on chaps. x. 5, &c., and xx.).

'The most noteworthy feature of this important group of discourses is the wise distinction everywhere made between the various classes of opponents. Isaiah well knew that the mass of the people erred rather from weakness and fear than intentionally, and that only individual, defiantly rash 'princes' had so miserably gone astray in their aims and calculations. He therefore varies his tone and manner, according as he addresses the leaders of the nation or the people themselves. In the first

case, the Divine words come from his mouth with a crushing force; in the second, they are full of gentle seriousness and hope' (Ewald). This variety of tone is specially exhibited in chap. xxviii.

[1] Woe to the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim,
and the fading flower of his glittering bravery, which is on
the head of the fat valley of those who are smitten down by
wine. [2] Behold, a strong and unflinching one hath Jehovah;
like a storm of hail (and) a tempest of destruction, like a
storm of mighty, overflowing waters, he shall cast it to the
ground with force. [3] With the feet shall it be trampled upon
—the proud crown of the drunkards of Ephraim; [4] and the
fading flower of his glittering bravery, which is on the head of
the fat valley, shall become as an early fig before the fruit-
harvest, which whoso seeth, while it is yet in his hand he
swalloweth it. [5] In that day shall Jehovah Sabáoth be for a

[1] Isaiah opens with a woe upon Samaria. He has before now said (viii. 6, comp. Mic. i. 6, &c.) that the storm of judgment must first break upon Samaria, and then upon Jerusalem—not merely for geographical reasons, but because the spiritual condition of both cities is similar. He mentions drunkenness, not as the root of the national evil, but rather as its flower. The appalling thing is that when all is on the point of collapsing, those responsible for the state should be given up to careless self-indulgence.——**The proud crown . . .**] 'Isaiah fuses into one image the heads of the nation, crowned with flowers at their habitual debauches, and the capital cities—Samaria and Jerusalem (?)[1]—each reposing in its fertile valley, and crowned with a chaplet of towers intertwined with vines and olives' (Strachey). The luxury of Samaria reflects itself in the tribute of Jehu to Shalmaneser, which includes bowls, cups, bottles, and vessels of gold (Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, p. 114).——**Smitten down by wine**] Comp on xvi. 8.

[2] **Hath Jehovah**] As his prepared instrument. So 'Jehovah hath a day,' ii. 12, xxii. 5.——**Unflinching**] An uncommon word; again in xl. 26.——**Destruction**] Word only found here and in Deut. xxxii. 24, Ps. xci. 6.——**Force**] Lit., hand; comp. Ex. xiv. 31. So Assyrian *idu* (= Hebr. *yād*), constantly (Norris's *Assyrian Dict.* i. 209).

[4] **An early fig**] A special delicacy; comp. Hos. ix. 10, Mic. vii. 1, Nah. iii. 12, Jer. xxiv. 2.

[5] When this great act in the drama of judgment is over, there will be an incipient fulfilment of the Messianic promise.——**Unto the remnant of his people**] The meaning is not very clear. Does 'his people' include Judah as well as Israel, or only Israel? The analogy of viii. 6 makes it probable that the former view is correct, though the promise is doubtless inserted here out of fairness to Ephraim, which still had its standing-ground in Jehovah's covenant. But we must evidently supplement the promise from x. 21. It is a converted 'remnant' of which the prophet speaks.

[1] Surely not Jerusalem, which is nowhere described as situated in a valley. See on xxii. 5.

glittering crown, and for a brave diadem unto the remnant of his people, [6] and for a spirit of judgment to him who sitteth on the judgment-seat, and for valour to those who turn back war to the gate. [7] But even these reel with wine and stagger with strong drink; priest and prophet reel with strong drink, they are swallowed up through wine, they stagger with strong drink; they reel in the vision, they totter in judgment. [8] For all tables are full of filthy vomit, so that no place is left. [9] Whom would he teach knowledge, and whom would he make to understand the Tidings? Those who are weaned from the milk, and separated from the breasts? [10] For (it is) 'command upon command, command upon command, rule upon rule,

[6] Civil justice is still (as in chap. xi.) the most prominent feature of the Messianic period as it mirrors itself in the mind of the prophet. Jehovah, he says, shall inspire the judges with a **spirit of judgment**. He specially refers to the priests, see *v.* 7, and comp. Deut. xvii. 8–12, Ex. xxi. 22, 2 Chr. xix. 5–8. ——**Judgment-seat**] Same meaning of *mishpāt* in xli. 1, comp. Job ix. 32, xxii. 4.——**To the gate**] i.e., probably, to the gate of the city from which the enemies came, comp. 2 Sam. xi. 23.

[7] Here the prophet seems to be summing up a fresh cycle of prophecies.—A scene worthy of Samaria is being enacted in Jerusalem (comp. Am. vi. 1–7, Mic. ii. 11). Priests and prophets come visibly drunk (from the sacrificial feasts? see on xxv. 6) to their most solemn functions of judgment (see above) and prophecy. Isaiah refers of course to the lower order of prophets, who had no revelations of spiritual truth like himself.

[9, 10] The drunkards mocking Isaiah over their cups. Does he not know what respectable persons he is dealing with, not like children who need leading-strings, but educated priests and prophets? They have caught up from Isaiah one of his favourite words (probably), and repeat it with a sneer—viz., **Tidings**, i.e., revelation, that which the prophet has 'heard from Jehovah' (*v.* 22, comp. xxi. 10). The word occurs again in this sense in *v.* 19, liii. 1, Ob. 1. It is from these passages that ἀκοή gets its peculiar meaning in Rom. x. 16, 17. **Knowledge** is also a term for the prophetic preaching, i. 3, xxxiii. 6. (I am not sure that the above interpretation (Ew., Del., Naeg.) is correct; it is at any rate possible and worthy. Others take 'weaned from the milk' as an allegory either of simplicity of faith (Kay) or of the very opposite of this (Weir), omitting of course the interrogation.) ——**For (it is) command upon command . . .**] He is always interfering with moral and (see *v.* 12) political recommendations; always finding some 'little' point to censure and correct. So Dr. Kay, with most moderns. Dr. Weir suggests that this verse 'describes the hurried and anxious efforts of those busied in repairing the walls (comp. xxii. 10).' Geiger calls the Hebrew punctuation a deviation from the simple sense ('filth on filth, spitting on spitting') suggested by the words of *v.* 8. According to him the authors of the vowel-points have made a persistent effort to remove the 'unseemly' words 'filth' and 'spitting' from the Hebrew Scriptures (*Urschrift*, pp. 410–413). The 'unseemliness' of his explanation is more manifest than its simplicity.

rule upon rule, a little here, a little there.' [11] Yea, with stammerings of lip and with another tongue shall he speak unto this people; [12] because he said unto them, This is the rest, give ye rest to the weary; and this is the refreshment, but they would not hear. [13] But the word of Jehovah shall be unto them 'command upon command, command upon command, rule upon rule, rule upon rule, a little here, a little there,' that they may fall, and stumble backward, and be broken, and be snared, and taken.

[14] Therefore hear the word of Jehovah, ye men of scorn, rulers of this people which is in Jerusalem. [15] Because ye have said, We have entered into a covenant with Death, and

[11] The prophet retorts their own language upon them. Yes; it shall be in fact as you say. This childish monotone shall indeed sound in your ears. The description which you give of the revelations of Jehovah shall be exactly applicable to the harsh, laconic commands of a merciless invader. For Assyrian, although closely allied to Hebrew, was sufficiently different from it both in grammar and in vocabulary to seem a 'stammering' or 'barbarous' tongue to Isaiah's contemporaries. The common diplomatic and commercial language of Syria and Assyria was Aramaic (see xxxvi. 11).——**Shall he speak**] The Assyrians being God's instruments. So xxix. 3: '*I* will lay siege against thee.'——**Here is the rest**] i.e., the true rest. Isaiah practically grants the monotony, or rather uniformity, of his preaching. But there was but one remedy for the evils of the time. 'Through returning and rest shall ye be saved' (xxx. 15). It was the 'rest,' not of passive obedience to Assyria, but of hearty faith in Jehovah, which he recommended. Comp. Mic. ii. 10, Jer. vi. 16.

[14-22] Jehovah pronounces judgment. He addresses—not the king, who is passed over in silence in most of the Hezekian discourses of Isaiah (comp. on vii. 2)—but the 'rulers,' the politicians. These are designated **men of scorn** (comp. *v.* 22, and xxix. 20). The title 'scorners' seems to be given in Proverbs to the irreligious section of the class of the 'wise men,' and to their adherents. Among the latter would naturally be the politicians, governed as they were by considerations of mere expediency. So the N. Israelitish magnates are called 'scorners' in Hos. vii. 5.—The divine oracle has two aspects, like that addressed upon a similar occasion to Ahaz:—it holds forth at once a curse and a blessing. The ruling classes at Jerusalem had secured themselves, as they thought, by a well-devised scheme against an Assyrian invasion. They had their fortresses, their soothsayers and prophets, their diplomatists, the latter already occupied with the preliminaries for a treaty with Egypt. But this 'refuge,' so carefully constructed, shall prove a 'refuge of lies,' while those who trust in Zion's 'foundation-stone' shall alone preserve their ground.—Del. thinks 'lie' and 'falsehood' in *v.* 17 means the contemplated breach of faith towards Assyria; comp. Ezek. xvii. 15, 16, where Zedekiah's rebellion against Babylon is rebuked. But a more general explanation seems safer; a 'lie' is anything that disappoints the expectation, comp. Jer. xv. 18.

[15] **Entered into a covenant with.**] 'A kind of proverbial expression to denote perfect security from evil and mischief of any sort.

with Sheól have we made an agreement; the overflowing scourge, when it passeth along, shall not come unto us, for we have set lies for our refuge, and in falsehood have we hid ourselves:—[16] Therefore, thus saith Jehovah, Behold, I [a]will found[a] in Zion a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner-stone of solid foundation; he that hath faith, shall not [b]give way.[b] [17] And I will set justice for a line, and righteousness for a plummet, and hail shall sweep away the refuge of lies, and the hiding-place of falsehood shall waters overflow; [18] and your covenant with Death shall be cancelled, and your agreement with Sheól shall not stand: the overflowing scourge, when it

[a] So Sept., Koppe, Weir.—Am he that hath founded. Hebr. points.
[b] Make haste. Hebr. text.

Job v. 23, Hos. ii. 18, Lucan ix. 894 (of the Psylli: Pax illis cum morte data est.)'—Lowth.——**Death . . . Sheól.**] See on v. 14, Obs. the 'scorners' or free-thinkers have retained a strong belief in the infernal powers, though little enough in those supernal.——**The overflowing scourge.**] Perhaps a sceptical reference to the prophecy of the 'overflowing waters,' which shall 'sweep along into Judah' (viii. 7, 8), or to similar prophecies, 'Scourge,' comp. x. 26.——**Behold I will found in Zion a stone.**] (See crit. note.) To understand the form of this prophecy, we must recollect the enormous size and cost of the foundation-stones of Eastern public buildings:—comp. Job xxxviii. 6 'who *cast* (as a trifling burden) the earth's foundation-stone,' 1 Kings v. 17 'great stones, costly stones, hewed stones, to lay the foundation of the house.' But what is this 'stone'? Isaiah cannot mean to connect the peace and security of Zion (or, of the pious Israel) with a material stone. He has told us elsewhere that Jehovah is on the one hand, 'the Rock of Israel'(xxx. 29); on the other, 'a stone to fall against' to many nominal Israelites. Jehovah then must be meant here. There may, indeed, be an allusion to the old popular superstition which attached a peculiar sanctity to sacred stones, but if so, Isaiah only alludes to it to discountenance it. It is not said 'he who believeth on the stone shall not give way,' but simply 'he who believeth':—now the object of absolute faith can be but one, Jehovah. But the foundation-stone of the temple in the solid rock of Zion (from which the mosque called Kubbet es-sakhrâ, or 'the dome of the rock,' derives its name) might well be regarded as a type of the unchangeableness of that temple's God. This view is confirmed by the peculiar introductory form of expression, 'I will found *in Zion*;' it is the manifestation of the Divine faithfulness towards believers which is meant. Jehovah will in Zion verify his revealed character. The security of believers will justify their faith, even as the permanence of the temple-building verifies the solidity of the foundation (comp. especially xiv. 32). There is perhaps an allusion in Ps. cxviii. 22.——**Shall not give way.**] The text-reading does not suit the connection; it seems to have arisen out of a confusion of the letters Mem and Kheth. Sept., Targ., Pesh., feeling that something was wrong, render freely 'shall not be put to shame' (not to be explained from the Arabic).

[17] In contrast to Zion's *immobile saxum*, all other objects of confidence shall be swept away.

[18] **Cancelled.**] Obliterated as

passeth along—ye shall be unto it for trampling upon; [19] as often as it passeth along, it shall take you away, for morning by morning shall it pass along, by day and by night; and it shall be simply a terror to understand the Tidings. [20] For too short is the bed for one to stretch himself out at length, and too narrow the covering when one wrappeth himself in it. [21] For Jehovah shall arise as on mount Perazim, he shall be stirred as in the valley of Gibeon: to do his work—alien is his work, and to carry out his task—strange is his task. [22] And now—behave not as scorners, lest your bonds become fixed, for [c]final and decisive is that which I have heard[c] (coming) from the Lord, Jehovah Sabáoth, over all the land.

[23] Give ye ear, and hear my voice; attend ye, and hear

[c] So Kay.

an invalid document. —— **For trampling upon.**] So of the Assyrians, x. 6.

[19] **Seize upon you**] The image is that of a flood, which carries off more and more human victims at each time of its appearance. Repeated Assyrian invasions. —— **To understand the Tidings**] A clear reference to *v.* 9. Men shall then understand but too well the 'Tidings' which they once scorned. Or, perhaps, on the analogy of *v.* 13; As they refused a spoken revelation, they shall be compelled to understand the preaching of facts.

[20] **For . . .**] A popular proverb for a state of painful uneasiness.

[21] **Perazim . . . Gibeon**] Scenes of David's victories over the Philistines; see 2 Sam. v. 20 ('Baal of Perazim,' because the hill was surmounted by a sanctuary of Baal), 23 (Geba), 1 Chr. xiv. 16 (Gibeon). Ew. however denies this reference, and thinks, rather, of the events of Josh. x. 10 (the natural phenomena suit our prophecy, comp. *vv.* 2, 17). But both may be combined. —— **Alien is his work**] 'Alien,' such as might be understood if worked upon foreigners, but not upon Jehovah's 'peculiar' people. See on i. 7, and comp. Job xxxi. 3, A. V. 'a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity' (see Hebr.); also Jer. ii. 14. 'His work,' i.e., his work of judgment, as x. 12.

[22] Again an appeal to the politicians, who are ambitious of breaking the **bonds** of the Assyrian yoke (x. 27, Nah. i. 13), and who scorn the prophet of ill tidings. But this is only the way to fix their bonds, and even worse than this, to invite certain destruction.—The closing words recur in x. 23, suggesting the nearly contemporaneous origin of both prophecies.

[23] A turn takes place in the discourse, or rather perhaps a fresh prophecy is summed up. The style is gnomic—that of the so-called *K'hokma* or 'wisdom'-literature; obs. especially the word rendered 'wisdom,' which occurs ten times in the ethical books of Proverbs and Job. Comp. xxxii. 6–8, which is also in the gnomic style, and xxix. 24 (see note). The inference is that the literary style of the prophet was influenced by that of his less purely religious fellow-teachers, the 'wise men.'—The object of this discourse is to comfort believers. The operations of ploughing and threshing are a silent parable, teaching those who have the inner ear the meaning of Israel's *tribulations*. The delicate fennel-flower is not threshed, neither does Jehovah thresh his people; or if some

my speech. 24 Is a ploughman continually ploughing in order to sow; (or) opening and harrowing his ground? 25 When he hath levelled the surface thereof, doth he not scatter fennel-flower, and cast abroad cummin, and plant wheat and [e]barley, and [e] vetch as the border thereof. 26 And [f]he correcteth each[f] as is fitting; his God instructing him. 27 For fennel-flower is not threshed with a sledge, nor is a cart-wheel rolled over the cummin, but fennel-flower is beaten out with a staff, and cummin with a rod. 28 [g]Is bread-corn crushed to pieces? Nay[g], not for ever is he threshing it, or driving his cart-wheel and his horses (over it); he doth not crush it to pieces. 29 This also proceedeth from Jehovah Sabáoth; he maketh counsel wonderful, wisdom great.

[e] Text repeats this word in a corrupt form, Wellhausen (see crit. note).
[f] (God) traineth him, Vulg., A. E., Kimchi, Ges., Ew., Del.
[g] Bread-corn is threshed, but. Ew. (another read.)

wise purpose leads him now and then to do so, he does not crush them to pieces, his object being to purify, and not to destroy. (So Drechsler, Del., Naeg.) — Ewald gives a different explanation: 'Ye magnates and philosophers, who imagine yourselves to be far more than a husbandman, will ye observe no moderation and propriety? will ye go on in your wild, irrational life?' But this implies that up to a certain point the unreason of the 'scorners' was justified.—On the agricultural allusions in this section see Mr. Houghton's papers on the botany of the Bible in the *Bible Educator*. In the rendering **vetch**, I follow Wetzstein *ap.* Del. p. 705. Apparently a kind of vetch was placed round the fields of grain as a protecting border. According to Wetzstein, the *ricinus* is still cultivated with this object.——**And he correcteth each** . . .] Not only the soil, but the seed, is in a certain sense 'chastised' or 'corrected,' regard being had in each case to the character of the seed. Comp. Jer. xxx. 11, xlvi. 28, where the same phrase occurs. Del.'s rend. seems less natural and forcible, though it has the support of the older interpreters.——**Instructing him**] viz., through the gift of reason. Comparisons of the mythic revelations of Osiris, Oannes, Bacchus, are therefore not in point.

29 **This also**] viz., this judicious procedure of the husbandman. —— **Counsel wonderful**] Comp. ix. 6.

CHAPTER XXIX.

A SUMMARY of two discourses. *Vv.* 1–12 contain the riddle of Ariel and its explanation; *vv.* 13–24 a prediction of a sweeping judgment on the untheocratically minded members of the church-nation. In the latter part (*v.* 15), we meet with the first allusion to the negotiations with Egypt, which are more distinctly denounced in chaps. xxx. xxxi. The politicians as well as the prophet are awake to the pressing danger from Assyria, but the efforts of the former being but worldly-wise

will utterly fail. Within a year, says the prophet, 'Ariel' will be reduced to extremities. In xxxii. 9–20 the interval allowed is slightly longer.—Isaiah implies that his unsusceptible bearers did not well understand his language; no wonder, then, if *we* find it difficult, even in the light of a sympathetic and comparative study of his works.

[1] Alas for Ariel, Ariel, city where David encamped! Add year to year, let the feasts run their round; [2] then will I straiten Ariel, and there shall be moaning and bemoaning, but she shall be unto me as an Ariel. [3] And I will encamp in a circle about thee, and lay siege against thee with a [a]mound, and set up siege-works against thee; [4] and thou shalt speak, being abased, from the ground, and thy speech shall be subdued (coming) from the dust, and thy voice shall be as that of a ghost from the ground, and from the dust thy speech shall come chirpingly. [5] But the multitude of thy enemies shall become as small dust, and as the flitting chaff the multitude of the terrible ones, and it shall come to pass in a moment, suddenly. [6] From Jehovah Sabáoth [b]shall she be

[a] Palisade, Kay. [b] A visitation shall be held, Ges., Del.

[1] **Alas for**] 'Wo to' (A. V.) does not suit the context, which is one of promise as well as of threatening. ——**Ariel**] One of Isaiah's favourite symbolic names (comp. Rahab, Valley of Vision, &c.), and signifying probably God's Lion (comp. Gen. xlix. 9, Ezek. xix. 2, 3). From one point of view, Jehovah is Jerusalem's Lion (xxxi. 4); from another, Jerusalem is Jehovah's Lion. Why not, then, Arijah (Lion of Jehovah)? Because the form Ariel was already in use as a stronger synonym for *gibbōr* 'hero' (2 Sam. xxiii. 20, Isa. xxxiii. 7?); it is also said by Brugsch to have this meaning in Egyptian, being one of a large class of Egyptian words borrowed from the Semitic. The meaning (adopted by Del. and formerly Hitz.) 'hearth of God' seems to me improbable, and the reference to Ezek. xliii. 15, 16, of at any rate doubtful value. Comp. *Notes and Criticisms*, pp. 31, 32. ——**Encamped**] i.e., not in a hostile sense (as Sir E. Strachey, following Sept. and Vulg.), but = dwelt—comp. 'To your tents, O Israel:' perhaps with the added notion of 'strength and security' (Dr. Weir). ——**Add year to year**] This may mean either, Complete one more year; or merely, Enter upon the new year. Probably the latter, since 1. 'Add ye' implies a solemn act on the part of the persons addressed, such, for instance, as the celebration of the new moon of the first month; and 2. the phrase can thus be harmonised with the analogous description in xxxii. 10. ——**But she shall be . . .**] But in the very extremity of her need I will enable her to verify her name, 'God's Lion.'

[3] **With a mound**] This was for the purpose of using the battering-ram, comp. Jer. xxxiii. 4, and Prof. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, i. 472. ——**About thee**] 'Thee' is feminine, referring to the daughter of Zion.

[4] **As that of a ghost**] See on viii. 19, where the same word, rendered 'chirp,' occurs.

[6] **But the multitude . . .**] Dr.

visited[b] with thunder, and with earthquake, and a great noise, with whirlwind and hurricane and the flame of devouring fire; [7] and as a dream, a vision of the night, shall be the multitude of all the nations that go to war against Ariel, even all that go to war against her and her intrenchments, and those that straiten her. [8] And it shall be as when a hungry man dreameth, and behold! he eateth; but he waketh, and his soul is empty; and as when a thirsty man dreameth, and behold! he drinketh; but he waketh, and behold! he is faint, and his soul craveth: so shall it be with the multitude of all the nations which go to war against mount Zion.

[9] [c]Astonish yourselves,[c] and be astonished; blind yourselves, and be blind! They are drunken, but not with wine; they stagger, but not with strong drink. [10] For Jehovah hath poured out upon you a spirit of deep sleep, and hath closed your [d]eyes, and your [e]heads hath he covered, [11] so that the vision throughout is become unto you as the words of a sealed writing which if one delivers to a man that knoweth letters, saying, Pray read this, he saith, I cannot, for it is sealed;

[b] Shew yourselves hesitating, Hebr. text. [d] Eyes, the prophets, Hebr. text.
[e] Heads, the seers, Hebr. text.

Kay prefers 'and' to 'but,' on the ground that 'a comparison of *vv.* 4, 6, shows that *v.* 5 must still relate to the humiliation of Jerusalem.' The continuity of the discourse is at first sight in favour of this view; but the expression 'thy strangers' (i.e., thy foes), cannot easily be reconciled with it. The simplicity with which *v.* 5 is appended to *v.* 4, is, perhaps, a rhetorical artifice to heighten the contrast. Comp. the way in which vii. 17 is attached to vii. 13–16.

[7, 8] Twofold application of the figure of a dream. The enemies of Zion shall come to nothing, like a dream; they shall also be disappointed, as one who dreams of eating and drinking.

[9] The hearers stare in astonishment at a prophecy seemingly so out of relation to facts. The prophet warns them that if they wilfully deaden their spiritual faculties, there will be no emerging afterwards from this state of blindness and stupefaction. Jehovah will judicially fix them in it.——**Astonish yourselves**] Implying that the state is self-caused. So Hab. i. 5. It is mainly the ruling class which is addressed, hence the prophet says, **They are drunken, but not with wine**, alluding to xxviii. 7.

[10, 11] They are thus spiritually asleep, with eyes closed, and heads wrapped up (in Oriental fashion). Not only the revelation in *vv.* 1–8, but the whole body of Isaiah's prophecy, is become non-existent to them. This is further illustrated by a comparison. The educated portion of the ruling class, having a merely secular intelligence, is like a man who is asked to read a writing, but is unable to 'loose the seals' (Rev. v. 2). We may fairly infer from this passage that prophecies of Isaiah were already circulated in a written form. The words inserted after 'eyes' and

[12] and should the writing be delivered to one that knoweth not letters, saying, Pray read this, he saith, I know not letters. [13] And the Lord said, Because this people draweth near, with their mouth and with their lips honouring me, while their heart is far from me, and (because) their fear of me is (nothing but) a commandment of men which is taught; [14] therefore behold I will continue to deal wonderfully with this people, even very wonderfully, and the wisdom of their wise men shall perish, and the understanding of their understanding ones shall hide itself. [15] Woe unto those who deeply hide their purpose from Jehovah, so that their work is done in a dark place, and they say, Who seeth us and who noticeth us?

'heads' in Hebr. text are evidently glosses. The word 'you' in *v.* 10 *must* mean the same persons as 'yourselves' in *v.* 9, viz. the ruling class, including, of course, the prophets. Must one add that to be asleep involves the closing of the eyes? It would be strange to build a fresh allegory *in the same verse* on so essential a detail. Still no one would venture to excise the words, were it not for the existence of so many other glosses, both in the Hebrew Bible and in the LXX. Comp. especially ix. 15.

[12] **And should the writing . . .**] A further comparison, growing out of that in *v.* 11. Isaiah chiefly attacks the ruling class, but these only as representatives of the people. The judgment will fall with equal certainty on both the ruled and the rulers. He therefore adds a word for the former. Being equally devoid of secular and spiritual intelligence (comp. Jer. v. 4), they are like a man who can neither unseal nor read a writing (see on viii. 1). Both in form and in contents the prophecies of Isaiah are quite out of their reach.—It is this verse which gives a colour of reason for the distribution of *v.* 10 among two classes of Jews. But then this verse is an appendix, and prepares the way for the sentence upon 'this people' in *v.* 13.

[13 14] A summary of a fresh discourse. The Judahites are nominally worshippers of Jehovah, but it is merely formal lip-service; consequently Jehovah will continue to **deal wonderfully** with them. This is a very strong expression, implying that Jehovah's dealing with his people is nothing short of inconceivable (see on ix. 6), inasmuch as it seems to run counter to his covenant-promises to Israel; the phrase is parallel to 'foreign is his work,' &c., in xxviii. 21 (see note). 'Continue,' because the invasion of Rezin and Pekah had already destroyed the illusion of Judah's security.——**A commandment of men**] Alluding to *pre-canonical* collections of ritual laws, which, as we know from Hos. viii. 12, Jer. viii. 8, were current in the times of the pre-exile prophets. Compare on i. 11.——**Taught**] This is verbally, at least, inconsistent with Ps. xxxiv. 11.

[15] The hypocrisy of the ruling class shows itself in their worldly-wise but underhand policy. They tacitly recognise the justice of Isaiah's claims to political as well as spiritual direction (see on xxx. 2), and, like Ahaz on a similar occasion (see on chap. vii.) seek to throw the veil of secresy over their untheocratic pursuit of worldly alliances. But Isaiah detects an alteration in their manner. He divines their purpose, and in figurative language exposes its 'perversity.'

16 O your perverseness! Should the potter be accounted
as clay, that the work should say of him that made it, He
made me not? and the thing formed say of him that formed
it, He hath no understanding?

17 Is it not yet a very little while, and Lebanon shall be
turned into garden-land, and garden-land accounted a forest?
18 And in that day the deaf shall hear the words of a writing,
and out of gloom and darkness the eyes of the blind shall
see, 19 and the humble shall obtain fresh joy in Jehovah, and
the poor among men shall exult in the Holy One of Israel.
20 For the terrible one will have come to nought, and the
scorner be gone, and all that watched for iniquity be cut
off, 21 that make people sinners [f] by words, [f] and lay snares
for him that reproveth in the gate, and deprive the righteous

[f] For a word, Ew., Del.

16 **Should the potter . . .**] A favourite comparison with the Biblical writers, comp. xlv. 9, lxiv. 8 (7), Jer. xviii. 6, Sirach xxxiii. 13, Rom. ix. 20.

17 **Is it not . . .**] Isaiah reminds his hearers of what he had probably often told them—the future material and spiritual *ἀποκατάστασις*, or restitution. The connection of ideas is more clearly traceable in the parallel passage, xxxii. 14–19 (see notes). The result of God's great judgment upon Jerusalem will be a temporary withdrawal of His life-giving Spirit from both land and people. But in a very little time (to the eye of faith) there will be a fresh outpouring of the Spirit; oppression will be at an end; desolation more than remedied; and the moral character of Israel regenerated. Most commentators prefer to take *v.* 17 figuratively. But a comparison of the parallel passage favours a combined literal and symbolical interpretation. Isaiah's symbols are very seldom mere symbols (and then he takes care to tell us so), and one of his most characteristic ideas is a future transformation of nature corresponding to that of man.—— **Lebanon**] is merely a poetical synonym for 'forest;' comp. x. 34. It corresponds to 'pasture-land' in xxxii. 15, both being opposed to cultivated land; comp. x. 18.

18 Here there can be no doubt that the description is symbolic; see xxix. 10. The ignorant masses shall understand 'the words of a writing' (one might almost say 'of a Scripture,' see on *vv.* 10, 11), and the self-blinded (*v.* 9) shall acquire spiritual perceptions. Thus the sentence in vi. 10 shall be reversed.

20 **The terrible one**] i.e., the foes without (*v.* 5).——**The scorner**] i.e., the foes within (xxviii. 14, 22).

21 **That make people sinners . . .**] I take this clause to refer to the sin of false testimony. 'By words' = by mere words (lviii. 13); or, by lying words (Hos. x. 4). The ordinary view is that 'make sinners' = 'condemn'; this is possible, though a direct parallel is wanting; but the close formal parallelism of the last clause in the verse favours the above explanation.—— **Lay snares for . . .**] i.e., seek to compass the ruin of.——**Him that reproveth in the gate**] In the chief place of concourse, where, too, the judges sat. Hosea, in similar circumstances, bitterly exclaims, 'Yet let no man contend, and let no man reprove' (iv. 4); comp. Am. v. 10.——**Deprive**] Lit.,

by a mere nothing. [22] Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the house of Jacob, he that delivered Abraham: Jacob shall not henceforth be ashamed, and his face shall not henceforth turn pale; [23] for when he seeth, (namely) [g] his sons [g], the work of my hands within him, they shall count my name holy, and count holy the Holy One of Jacob, and the God of Israel shall they count dreadful; [24] and those that erred in spirit shall get understanding, and the murmurers shall receive instruction.

[g] See below.

turn aside, viz. from the favourable verdict due to him. Same idiom, Am. v. 12, Mal. iii. 5. More fully, Ex. xxiii. 6, 'Thou shalt not turn aside the right of the weak.'——**A mere nothing**] The Hebrew word is *tōhū*, i.e., (1) Chaos (see on xxiv. 10); (2) a thing of nought, see xl. 23 (parallel to 'nothing').

[22 24] Conclusion. Israel will in future be spared the shame of oppression and captivity, for he will have learned the lesson of the sole divinity of Jehovah his God.——**Who delivered Abraham**] The same verb is used of the deliverance from Egypt (Deut. vii. 8 &c.) Evidently the prophet regards the migration of Abraham from Mesopotamia as caused partly by the 'vexing of his righteous soul' by his idolatrous kinsmen (comp. Josh. xxiv. 2, 3). Dozy, however, thinks Abraham is here a synonym for Israel.——**Jacob**] Is it Jacob the patriarch who is here represented as taking a sympathetic interest in the fortunes of his descendants? This is Ewald's opinion. But though a similar view may perhaps be traced elsewhere in the Bible (see on lxiii. 16), Jacob is here more probably a collective term for the people of Israel; otherwise, how are we to account for the words 'in his midst'?——**His sons**] I suspect this, with Ew., (in first but not second edition) and Knob., to be an early gloss, intended to explain the plural '*they* shall count holy,' and originally written in the margin. The word used (*yĕled*, not *bēn*) is not found with 'Jacob' or 'Israel' elsewhere. I have not, however, ventured to relegate the suspected words to the margin. For the change, which the proposed reading implies, from the collective singular to the plural, comp. xlii. 24, 25. ——**The work of my hands**] i.e., the divine judgment (comp. v. 12).

[24] **Erred in spirit**] So Ps. xcv. 10, 'erring in the heart.' Comp. on xxxii. 6.——**Instruction**] A word in the gnomic style (six times in Proverbs). Comp. on xxviii. 23-29.

CHAPTER XXX.

ISAIAH denounces the irreligious embassy to Egypt, which has now actually been sent. He predicts that Egypt will furnish no effective help to Judah, and that this flagrant unbelief of the Jews will be punished by the ruin of the state. But suddenly an impulse comes upon Isaiah to soften his tone, and offer consolation. True, affairs are getting worse and worse, but at the last extremity Jehovah will interpose for his waiting people. A splendid description is then given of the Messianic glories,

followed by a definite prediction of the catastrophe in store for Assyria. (See Analysis, *I. C. A.*, p. 69).

[1] Alas for the unruly sons (it is Jehovah's oracle), carrying out a purpose which is not from me, and [a] weaving a web [a] without my spirit, that they may add sin to sin; [2] who set forth to go down to Egypt, and have not asked at my mouth, to flee unto the fortress of Pharaoh, and to take refuge in the shadow of Egypt. [3] But the fortress of Pharaoh shall be unto you for shame, and the refuge in the shadow of Egypt for confusion. [4] For when his princes appear in Zoan, and his messengers arrive at Hanes, [5] all shall be ashamed of people who cannot profit them, who are not for help nor for profit, but for shame and also for reproach. [6] [b] Utterance of the beasts of the south-country.[b]] Through a land of trouble and distress, whence come lioness and lion, viper and flying dragon, they carry upon the necks of young asses their riches,

[a] Pouring out a libation, Ges., Naeg. [b] See below.

[1] **The embassy and its uselessness. Alas for**] So Dr. Kay, comparing i. 4.——**Not from me**] Same phrase in similar connection, Hos. viii. 4.——**Weaving a web**] i.e., the proposed treaty with Egypt. See Del. on rendering.

[2] **Have not asked**] A significant indication of the place demanded by the prophets in the theocracy.

[4, 5] The predominant or regulative tense (speaking occidentally) is the perfect. Isaiah in spirit sees the ambassadors arrived in Egypt, and meeting with a disgraceful disappointment.——**Zoan . . . Hanes**] Both Zoan (Tanis) and Hanes (Heracleopolis magna) had given dynasties to Egypt, and were probably now the capitals of petty kingdoms (see Introd. to chap. xx.).——**People who cannot profit them**] So the Rab-shakeh (xxxvi. 6), and so Sargon, 'The people and their evil chiefs, To fight against me unto Pharaoh, The King of Egypt, *a monarch who could not save them*, Their presents carried and besought his alliance,' (Smith, *Assyrian Canon*, p. 130). Comp. Introd. to chap. xxxi.

[6] **Utterance of the beasts of the south**] An early reader appears to have written this in the margin, as a kind of catch-word to mark this very peculiar verse. Or, perhaps an editor inserted it, not in the margin, but in the text, supposing a new prophecy to begin with this verse. It is, however, impossible to separate *vv.* 6, 7 from the preceding verses, without which they are unintelligible. By the 'beasts of the south,' the interpolator meant those mentioned in *v.* 6. Del, however, who still maintains the Isaianic origin of the title, thinks the word rendered 'beasts,' should rather be translated 'river-ox,' or 'river-horse' (hippopotamus), the Behemoth of Job xl. 15. This, he remarks, is peculiarly suitable in this connection as an emblem of the pretentious but slow-moving Egypt.——**A land of trouble . . .**] i.e., the desert between Palestine and Egypt. Comp. Deut. viii. 15, Jer. ii. 6.——**Viper and flying dragon**] King Esar-haddon, relating the hardships he underwent in a province of Arabia, says that 'of snakes and scorpions like flies

and upon the bunches of camels their treasures, to people who cannot profit them. [7] Yea, the Egyptians—in vain and empty is their help, therefore [e] I proclaim concerning it [e] (Egypt), 'Rahab! they are utter indolence.'

[8] Now go, write it on a tablet before them, and inscribe it in a scroll, that it may serve to an after-day for a testimony for ever. [9] For a defiant people is it, lying sons, sons that will not hear the teaching of Jehovah, [10] who say to the seers, Ye shall not see, and to the prophets, Ye shall not prophesy unto us right things; speak unto us smooth things, prophesy

[e] I name it, Ges., Hitz., Ew., Del., Naeg.

(Delitzsch, "locusts") the land was full' (Fox Talbot, after Oppert, *Transactions of Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, iv. 260). As to the 'flying dragon,' see on xiv. 29.——**Their riches**] i.e., their presents for the Pharaoh.

[7] **I proclaim . . .**] The objection to alt. rend. is that it does not suit the following words, which present not a new name, but an explanation of an old one. Isaiah avails himself of the popular taste for pungently ironical humour. The riddle of 'Ariel' receives its counterpart in that of **Rahab I . . . indolence**] 'Rahab-hêm-shébheth.' Rahab was a name for Egypt in Hebrew poetry (see li. 9, with note, Job xxvi. 12, Ps. lxxxvii. 4, lxxxix. 10), expressing the 'boisterousness' or 'arrogance' of the Egyptians as a people ('ventosa et insolens natio,' as Pliny in his *Panegyric* calls them), and Isaiah's point is that the name Rahab had better be exchanged for Shébheth, i.e., 'inaction', so incapable have its bearers showed themselves of carrying out their promises. Obs. Rahab is used collectively, like 'Egypt' in the first verse-half. [I do not feel sure, however, that the text is correct. Comp. Olshausen's note on Job ix. 13].

[8, 9] Here Isaiah pauses in his discourse, warned, perhaps, by the threatening looks of the bystanders. An inner voice bids him (so I understand *v.* 8) first of all write a few words, such as 'Rahab = they are all inaction,' upon a tablet in the large common character, to be set up 'before them' in public (precisely as in viii. 1), and then inscribe the prophecy more fully in a scroll. For the latter a special reason is added. Isaiah's contemporaries refuse to listen to any but flattering prophecies, so that unless perpetuated by writing, the recent revelation will be ineffectual.—This is probably the earliest passage of certain date in which a Biblical author distinctly asserts the perpetual validity of his writing. Of course, in order to be 'a testimony for ever,' the prophecy of Isaiah must be stripped of its temporary references, and Rahab and Israel regarded as types of permanent phases of character.——**Inscribe**] Lit., carve, synonymous with 'write,' as x. 1, Job xix. 23, and in late Hebrew (Zunz, *Z.D.M.G.* xxv. 441). Comp. Ewald, *History*, i. 50, 51.

[10] **Prophets . . . prophesy**] The Hebr. has 'seers . . . see'—different words from the preceding. The Germans well 'Seher' and 'Schauer.'——**Prophesy not**] The spiritual prophets evidently experienced a sort of social persecution, comp. *v.* 20, Mic. ii. 6, 11, Am. ii. 12 and 2 Chr. xxiv. 20, 21 (the fate, of Zechariah).——**Speak unto us smooth things**] Here is the secret of the opposition between the two classes of prophets (the 'true' and the 'false'), viz., that the one makes prosperity conditional on righteous-

illusions, [11] turn aside from the way, decline from the path, abolish out of our sight the Holy One of Israel! [12] Therefore thus saith the Holy One of Israel, Because ye reject this word, and trust in [d] perverseness and crookedness, and rely thereon, [13] therefore this guilt shall be unto you as a rent portion that falleth, bulging out in a high wall, whose breaking cometh suddenly in a moment; [14] and he will break it as one breaketh an earthen pitcher, shivering it unsparingly, so that not a sherd is found in its shivered pieces for taking fire from the hearth, or drawing water from a cistern. [15] For thus hath the Lord said, even Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, By returning and rest should ye be saved, in quietness and in confidence should be your strength, but ye have refused; [16] and ye have said, No, but on horses will we fly; therefore shall ye flee; and, On the swift will we ride; therefore swift shall be those that pursue you. [17] One thousand at the rebuke of one, at the rebuke of five shall ye flee, till ye be left as a pine on the top of a mountain, and as a signal on a hill. [18] And therefore will Jehovah long till he can be gra-

[d] So Graetz (transposing two letters).—Oppression, Hebr. text.

ness or repentance, the other does not. See Jer. xxiii. 21, 22 (quoted in *I. C. A.*, p. 73).

[12] **This word**] i.e., the prophecy against the Egyptian alliance, the policy of which, in contrast with simple faith in Jehovah, is called in the parallel line **perverseness and crookedness** (comp. xxix. 15). The reading 'oppression' is explained to mean the oppressive measures used for collecting the subsidy to Egypt (comp. 2 Kings xv. 20), but this is rather forced, and spoils the parallelism. The right reading is confirmed by Prov. ii. 15, iv. 24.

[13] **Therefore this guilt . . .**] Sin, when it is mature, develops into punishment—one of the fundamental laws of God's kingdom, according to the prophets (see on v. 18, and comp. i. 31, xxxiii. 11, 12, James i. 15). On the figure which follows, see Sir E. Strachey, *Hebrew Politics*, p. 285.

[15] The conditions of the proffered deliverance are **returning and rest.** 'Returning' here is not 'conversion' (as Henderson, comp. i. 27), but the abandonment of the disquieting, distracting search for earthly aids (comp. Ps. cxvi. 7). Thus Ew. and Del. both have fragments of the meaning.

[16] **Horses** and **fly** rhyme in the Hebr. The horses are those of Egypt, xxxi. 3; they are of course representative of creaturely objects of confidence.

[17] **One thousand . . .**] A favourite hyperbole, see Deut. xxxii. 30, Josh. xxiii. 10, Lev. xxvi. 8. An Egyptian parallel in the inscription of king Pianchi, transl. by Cook: 'Many shall turn their backs on a few, and one shall rout a thousand.'

[18] **Therefore**] Because of the extremity of your need. So x. 23, 24: 'The Lord shall make a consumption. . . . Therefore . . . be not afraid of Assyria.'—The rendering and meaning of this passage are much disputed (see crit. note);

cious unto you, and therefore will he [e]wait in stillness[e] till he can have compassion upon you, for Jehovah is a God of righteousness; happy are all those that long for him!

19 For [f]a people shall dwell[f] in Zion, in Jerusalem; thou shalt weep no more: he will surely be favourable unto thee at the voice of thy cry; as soon as he heareth it, he hath answered thee. 20 And [g]though the Lord[g] give you bread in short measure and water in scant quantity, thy [h]teachers shall no more have to conceal themselves, but thine eyes shall constantly see thy [h]teachers; 21 and thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, 'This is the way, walk ye in it,' when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. 22 And ye shall defile the covering of thy silver graven images, and the overlaying of thy golden molten images, thou shalt scatter

[e] (Adopting another reading.) Be on high, Hebr. text.
[f] O people who dwellest, Ew.
[g] The Lord shall [taking the verse as a qualified promise], Del., Kay.
[h] Teacher, Ew., Kay, (*not* Del.).

the two verbs of the received text seem to me entirely inconsistent; the emendation of a 'tittle' (Matt. v. 18) restores harmony.—Here, I cannot help thinking, we have an instance of the combination of discourses delivered at different times. The paragraph to which *v.* 18 forms the transition seems to me distinctly to imply that invaders are already in the land.——**A God of righteousness**] A God who faithfully carries out his covenant, showing favour to his people and wrath to his enemies.

19-33 The true confidence, and its reward.——**For**] Because Jehovah is secretly longing to show mercy. Or, confirmatory of the last clause, = yea.——**A people shall dwell**] The national continuance is assured.——**In Zion**] With an allusion to the sacredness of Jehovah's abode. But, to prevent any misunderstanding, or, with affectionate emphasis, the prophet adds, 'in Jerusalem.'

20 **Though the Lord give you . . .**] Judgment shall be tempered with mercy. The first compensating benefit arising out of the siege will be that the silenced prophets of Jehovah shall emerge from their hiding-places (see on *v.* 10), and the Divine oracles be once more constantly heard. Alt. rendering is quite possible, and is temptingly set forth by Dr. Kay; but the image of Jehovah in person as a guide and teacher has no analogy in this prophecy. In chaps. xl.–lxvi. it would be more intelligible (comp. xl. 11).

21 A new figure, not a continuation of *v.* 20. With the inner ear, the Jews shall have a divinely whispered warning, whenever they are tempted to leave the straight path. The opposite of xxviii. 11.

22 But before a fresh shower of blessings can descend, the nation must make a decided break with the past:—they must destroy the instruments of their sin, the idols. ——**And ye . . .**] So text; but it may be an error for the second person sing.——**Graven . . . molten images**] 'Graven, i.e., carved, in reference to the inner solid figure of wood; molten, i.e., overlaid or covered, in reference to the outward metalline case or covering. Sometimes both epithets are applied at once: "I will cut off the

them as loathsomeness; thou shalt say unto it, Go out. [23] And he shall give rain for thy seed, with which thou sowest the ground, and bread-corn as the increase of the ground—it shall be juicy and fat; thy cattle shall feed in that day in a broad pasture. [24] And the oxen and the young asses which till the ground shall eat mixed provender with salt, winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. [25] And on every lofty mountain and on every high hill shall be rivulets and water-courses, in the day of the great slaughter, when the towers fall. [26] And the light of the moon shall be as the light of the sun, and the light of the sun shall be sevenfold, [1]as the light of seven days[1], in the day that Jehovah bindeth up the breach of his people, and healeth the wound of their stroke.

[27] Behold, the Name of Jehovah cometh from far, burning with anger, and in thick uplifting of smoke; his lips are full

[1] Omitted by Sept., Lowth.

graven and molten image," Nah. i. 14' (Bishop Horsley).——**The covering**] Specially mentioned as a proof of earnestness, the overlaying being the most costly part of the images. The practice of gilding images was also an Assyrian and Babylonian one (comp. Dan. iii. 1).——**Scatter them**] Comp. Ex. xxxii. 20, 2 Kings xxiii. 6.

[23] After this, we should expect to hear of the destruction of the foe (as in xxxi. 8, comp. 7), but this grand feature in the description is reserved for the end. First of all, the minds of the hearers are relieved as to their means of living.

[24] **Shovel and fan**] I retain this conventional rendering. On the very primitive instruments which are probably intended, see Consul Wetzstein, in an excursus to Delitzsch's *Jesaia*, ed. 2, p. 707.

[25] The irrigation of the soil is one of the chief features in Messianic descriptions; see Am. ix. 13, Joel iii. 18, and especially Ezek. xlvii. Obs., the streams flow not only in the plains, but among the sun-parched mountains and hills. So xli. 18.——**Slaughter . . towers**] The 'slaughter' is that of Jehovah's enemies, within Israel (xxviii. 18–21) as well as without. The 'towers' are all irreligious means of security (comp. ii. 12),—not the Assyrian warriors, an image without analogy in Isaiah.

[26] 'God, in whose light we see light, will make the days go brighter in the sense of his favour and peace' (R. Williams). Comp. Job. xi. 17. But Isaiah meant more than this. His symbols (as the reader may allow me again to remind him) are seldom mere symbols of the moral or spiritual world; but have at the same time a real, material body of their own. Del. has done good service in pointing this out. It is the glorification of nature to which the prophet here, as in chap. xi., refers. 'Largior hic campos æther et lumine vestit Purpureo' (Virgil, *Æn.* vi. 640).——**As the light . . .**] This looks like one of those diluting glosses in which the later scribes delighted (comp. Lowth's note).——**Buildeth up the breach . . .**] Same image as in i. 5.

[27-33] A symbolic description of the judgment, introduced by a theophany. It is indeed not Jehovah in the absolute sense who comes, but the Name of Jehovah, i.e., that side of Jehovah which is mani-

of indignation, and his tongue like devouring fire; [28] and his breath is like an overflowing torrent, dividing even to the neck, to swing nations in the fan of nothingness, and a bridle which leadeth astray (shall be) upon the cheeks of the peoples. [29] From you the song shall be as in the night when a feast is consecrated, and there shall be joy of heart, like his who setteth forth to the flute to come to the mountain of Jehovah,

fested to the world, or, as Del. concisely puts it, 'the God of Revelation.' The form of expression was easily intelligible to Isaiah's readers, being common to Hebrew with Phœnician religion (see on xxvi. 8). There is no figure of speech in it; Isaiah has a firm, though not logically defined, belief in the manifoldness of the Divine Being. The Name is obviously a 'person,' or perhaps better a 'persona.' See xviii. 7, xxvi. 8, and notes on lix. 19, lxiii. 9; also Del.'s note on Prov. xviii. 10. In the description which follows, the two figures of a storm and of an angry man are fused together.——**Devouring fire**] Comp. ix. 19, x. 17, xxix. 6, xxxiii. 14, Ex. xxiv. 17, Deut. ix. 3.

[28] The awful appearance comes stormily along. His breath is like a torrent in autumn time, which all but covers the man who has fallen into it (comp. viii. 8); and his object is **to swing nations** (i.e., to sift them with a violent motion of the hand) **in the fan of** (reducing them to) **nothingness** (comp. xxix. 5). The good Osiris, too, in his character of judge, is said to be represented with a flail or whip. ——**And a bridle . . .**] A fresh figure, borrowed from hunting (comp. Ezek. xix. 4, xxix. 4), with perhaps an allusion to a cruel practice of Eastern conquerors (see on xxxvii. 29). A new and terrible feature is suggested in the words, 'which leadeth astray.' The Assyrians are to be led against their will into paths which end in ruin (so Job xii. 24, 25).

[29] The fall of Assyria shall be greeted with dancing and with music. Sir E. Strachey appositely quotes the similar conduct of the neighbours of Athens on the destruction of the Piræus (Grote, ix. 449). In neither case can we quite sympathise; still there are certain collateral thoughts in Isaiah's mind, to be gathered from this and the other prophecies, which give a different colour to his anticipated rejoicing. Comp. also Ps. lviii. 10, 11.——**As in the night when a feast is consecrated** (i.e., opened, or, celebrated)] It is not improbable that the Passover had just taken place. Isaiah had predicted (xxix. 1) that when the feasts had 'gone round,' the dreaded enemy should be brought low, so that when the next Passover had ushered in the new (religious) year, it would be time to expect the fulfilment. The appropriateness of the reference is obvious, the danger from Sennacherib being hardly less than that from Pharaoh. There is also an allusion to the Passover in xxxi. 5 (see note). The mention of the night-celebration ('as in the night' &c.) agrees with the directions about the Passover, Ex. xii. 6, 8, 42, comp. Matt. xxvi. 30; and Ibn Ezra even refers to a (doubtless Agadic) story that Sennacherib's army perished on the Paschal night. On the other hand, Ewald thinks it is the Feast of Tabernacles (or of the Ingathering) which is intended. This was essentially a joyous festival, and at a *later* time there was a very elaborate night-ritual for its observance (see Haneberg's *Relig. Alterthümer*, 676–9). It is mentioned by Hosea (xii. 9), and is constantly referred to as 'the feast,' see 1 Kings viii. 2, 65, xii. 32, Ezek. xlv. 25 (see Hebr.), 2 Chr. vii. 8, 9,

unto the Rock of Israel. [30] And Jehovah shall cause the [k] peal of his voice to be heard, and the lighting down of his arm to be seen, in fury of anger, and the flame of devouring fire, the bursting of clouds, and a storm of rain, and hail-stones. [31] For at the voice of Jehovah shall Asshur be panic-stricken, when He shall strike with the rod; [32] and it shall come to pass that whenever the destined staff passeth over, which Jehovah letteth down upon him from above, it shall be with timbrels and with lutes; and with battles of swinging will he fight against them. [33] For a Topheth hath been set in order beforehand; it [l] also is [l] prepared for [m] Moloch; he hath

[k] So Dr. B. Davies. [l] Is also, Ew., Del.
[m] The king, Ew., Del., Naeg., &c.

and throughout the Mishna (Zunz)[1] —the Passover is only so called in the New Testament (e.g. Matt. xxvi. 5). After all, it is possible that Isaiah was not referring to one feast more than another.——**Who setteth forth to the flute**] This must be a day-celebration which is referred to—probably the festal processions of pilgrims from the country. Vitringa and others think of the procession of those who brought up the first-fruits, comparing the Talmudic treatise *Bikkūrim*, iii. 3, not, however, a perfectly reliable authority (Herzfeld, *Gesch.* iii. 128, 159). Obs., there is no mention of the Levitical singers here.——**The Rock of Israel**] 'Rock' was one of the synonyms for Jehovah; so xvii. 10, comp. Deut. xxxii. (six times), also the proper names Zuriel, Zurishaddai. Again a phrase of mythic origin.

[30] **The peal of his voice**] See Del. on Job xxxix. 20. The 'voice' is the thunder; comp. Ps. xxix.

[32] **The destined staff**] Comp. Hab. i. 12: 'O Jehovah, thou hast appointed them (*same verb*) for judgment.'—The **timbrels**, &c. are those with which the Jews are praising God.——**Battles of swinging**] i.e., those in which Jehovah swings his rod and deals blows to his enemies, comp. xix. 16.

[33] **A burning-place**] Hebr., *tophteh*, perhaps a derivative of Topheth = a place suitable for human sacrifices, like Topheth (or rather *the* Topheth, as it is an appellative). See Jer. xix. 13, 'the place of the Topheth.'——**Beforehand**] viz., in the Divine counsels. ——**It also is prepared for Moloch**] 'It also,' like the high places of the Topheth, is prepared for a great burning for Moloch (the heavenly 'king,' the Fire-god).—'What greater honour could there be for the god who delights in human sacrifices, than that Sennacherib and his whole army should be burned?' There is a precisely similar form of expression in xxxiv. 6, where the (figurative) sacrifice is destined for Jehovah. It is true, Isaiah nowhere else refers to Moloch, but we knew from Jer. vii. 31, xix. 13, 2 Kings xxiii. 10, comp. Isa. lvii. 5, that sacrifices of children were offered to Moloch in the pre-exile period, and the Chronicles specially mention the reign of Ahaz as one in which this took place. This, which I prefer, is also the view of Geiger and Dr. Payne Smith. In a slightly different form it is held by Luzzatto, Del., and Kuenen, who find in the passage a witty allusion to the double meaning of Mélek. The

[1] Plutarch also, in treating of the Jewish festivals, speaks of this as 'their greatest and most perfect one' (*Symp.*, iv. 6, 2).

made it deep and broad; the pile thereof hath fire and much wood; the breath of Jehovah, like a torrent of brimstone, shall kindle upon it.

CHAPTER XXXI.

UNABLE to prevent the negotiations with Egypt, Isaiah exhibits forcibly their disastrous consequences to both the parties concerned. He speaks as if he expected that the Egyptians would actually go out to fight against the Assyrians, but that they would suddenly be overthrown by the hand of Jehovah (*v.* 3). As a further explanation, the prophet adds that Jehovah himself will descend to save mount Zion from its besiegers, and appeals to his countrymen to return to their allegiance to Jehovah.

[1] Woe unto those that go down to Egypt for help, and rely upon horses; and that trust in chariots because they are many, and in horsemen because they are very strong, but have not looked unto the Holy One of Israel, and have not consulted Jehovah; [2] (though he also is wise,) but he will

real Topheth was for Moloch (rather Molek, a dialectic form of Mélek), the heavenly king, the metaphorical one for the king of Assyria. In this case, we must substitute 'the king' for 'Moloch.' Alt. rend., however, is quite justifiable; see Del. on Job ii. 10. It makes the clause simply the statement of a fresh fact concerning the Topheth. The king will then be simply 'the great king, the king of Assyria,' who, though he has to be burned like a malefactor (Josh. vii. 25, Lev. xx. 14, xxi. 9), deserves at any rate these grandiose preparations. If this view be adopted, the prophecy will be slightly inconsistent with that in xxxi. 8, 9, where Isaiah seems to speak as if Sennacherib would take flight, and return to his own land (comp. xxxvii. 34). This, however, is no objection, for as Dr. Riehm remarks, 'the prophets, in order to make their threatenings and promises forcible and impressive, frequently painted in detail the features of approaching judgment or mercy, without attaching particular importance to the details themselves, or wishing to make the truth of the prediction dependent upon their harmony' (*Messianic Prophecy*, p. 246).——**Deep and broad**] To take in Sennacherib and his whole army (as xxxiii. 12).

[1] **Rely upon horses**] Comp. xxx. 16. The only power which could compare with Assyria in its equipments for war was Egypt. Its horses were specially renowned for their strength. Every petty local king had his stud; his noblest tribute is 'the best horses of his stables'—see Lenormant, *Les premières civilisations*, i. 311–3, and comp. Hom., *Il.* ix. 383, 4, Ex. xiv. 6, 9, 1 Kings x. 28, 29. The weakness of Judah in cavalry is strikingly shown by xxxvi. 8. Isaiah censures the efforts to remedy this weakness as untheocratic, comp. on ii. 7.

[2] **Though he also is wise**] Ironically; 'he also,' as well as the Jewish politicians (xxix. 14). As Ewald remarks, it was a novelty to call Jehovah wise, due to the influence of the Wise Men (see on

bring evil to pass, and his words he will not set aside, and will arise against the house of evil-doers, and against the helpers of those that work wickedness. [3] Yea, the Egyptians are men and not God, and their horses flesh and not spirit; and if Jehovah stretch out his hand, he that helpeth will stumble, and he that is helped will fall, and they all will be consumed together. [4] For thus saith Jehovah unto me, As the lion with the young lion growleth over his prey, against whom there is called a troop of shepherds,—at their cry he is not dismayed, and at their noise he is not cast down,—so shall Jehovah Sabáoth descend to fight [a]upon mount Zion and [a]upon the hill thereof. [5] Like birds hovering, so shall Jehovah

[a] So Ges., Ew.—Against, Del., Kay, Weir, Naeg.

xxviii. 23–29).——**His words**] A revealed word being self-fulfilling (see on ix. 8). The 'words' referred to here are such as xxix. 14, xxx. 13–22.——**The house of evil-doers . . . . these that work wickedness**] i.e., the untheocratic Jews who direct the affairs of the nation.

[3] **Men and not God**] Comp. *v.* 8. So Hos. xi. 9, 'I am God and not man,' i.e., specifically different from man (see on x. 15).——**Flesh and not spirit**] i.e., dependent creatures, without any life in themselves, comp. xl. 6, 7.

[4] **As the lion . . .**] No passage in the book of Isaiah, observes Del., has such a Homeric ring as this (comp. *Il.* xviii. 161–2, xii. 299–302). As the lion will not give up his prey, so Jehovah will not allow the Assyrians to rob him of his 'peculiar treasure,' Jerusalem. The title Jehovah Sabáoth is here peculiarly appropriate (see appendix to chap. ii.); it has also governed the selection of the verb for fight.—The rendering 'fight upon' (and not 'fight against') mount Zion seems to me to be required by the terms of the figure; and to be confirmed by the title 'God's Lion' in xxix. 1. The 'growling' of the lion '*over* his prey' corresponds to the thunder amidst which (comp. xxix. 6) Jehovah shall join the fray '*upon* mount Zion.' If the prophet had merely meant to say that Jehovah would execute vengeance upon Jerusalem, he would not have selected a figure expressive of the determination with which the lord of a valuable possession resists all attempts to deprive him of it. In fact, supposing that the descent of Jehovah is hostile to Jerusalem, the object compared to Jehovah must surely be, not the lion who resists, but the shepherds who attack, which of course the tenor of the description renders impossible. It is a subsidiary argument in favour of my view that the next verse contains a promise. The figure of the hovering birds exactly corresponds to that of the lion growling over his prey. It is natural, then, to regard *v.* 6 as a further development on the same lines as *v.* 5. Still I freely admit that, were Del.'s interpretation of *v.* 5 in itself the more probable, we could explain *v.* 6 on the analogy of xxix. 2, which has a transition as abrupt as that which Del. supposes to exist in *v.* 6.

[5] Jehovah is like a lion to his foes, but like a mother-bird to his own. Strong and bold and courageous as the lion, tender and provident as the bird, but, unlike even the eagle, able under all circumstances to repel the assailant. There is a similar effective contrast

Sabáoth cover over Jerusalem, covering and delivering, passing over and rescuing. 6 Return ye unto him, against whom they have gone deep in transgression, O children of Israel.

7 For in that day they shall reject every one his not-gods of silver and his not-gods of gold, which your hands made you for a sin, 8 and Assyria shall fall by the sword of one who is not a man, and the sword of one who is not earth-born shall devour him; and he shall take his flight from the sword, and his young men shall be enslaved: 9 and [b] his rock shall pass away [b] through terror, and his princes shall be panic-stricken at the signal: the oracle of Jehovah, who hath his fire in Zion, and his furnace in Jerusalem.

[b] He shall pass by his rock, Ges., Ew.

of figures in Mic. v. 7, 8. For the comparison of Jehovah to a lion, comp. xxxviii. 13, Hos. v. 14, xi. 10, Am. i. 2, Jer. xxv. 38; to a bird, Deut. xxxii. 11. Other bird-similes in I. Isaiah, x. 14, xvi. 2; in II. Isaiah, xl. 31, lix. 11, lx. 8.——**Passing over**] The explanation of the Passover (Pésakh) presupposed in Exodus (xii. 13) seems to be well known to Isaiah.

6 **Return ye . . .**] Those who adhere to the ordinary sense of the imperative have to supply the connection from the statements of Isaiah elsewhere. Jerusalem will be sifted 'in that day,' and only those who 'return,' or are converted, will be saved. Therefore, return in time. But it is simpler to take the imperative here as conveying a strong assurance; comp. x. 21 for the thought and xxxiii. 20 for the idiom. (Change of person, as in i. 29, v. 8.)

7 The casting away of the idols is not a mark of despairing irritation (as in ii. 20), but of repentance. What the prophet asked for in *v.* 6, he predicts in *v.* 7.

8 **The sword**] This symbolic phrase (see on xxvii. 1) suggests a storm of thunder and lightning, comp. xxix. 6.

9 **His rock**] (lit., his cliff) i.e., the king of Assyria (Luther, Del., Riehm, Naeg.), whose name and power had hitherto been 'as the shadow of a huge cliff' to his servants. The expression is singular, but not more so than xix. 13 (which see). Two points must be held firmly, 1. that 'his rock' is the subject, on account of the parallelism, which is very closely preserved in this chapter; and 2. that the 'rock' is a person,—Hitzig's explanation, 'the rock on which Asshur thought himself so firmly planted' (comp. Ps. xxx. 7), is unsuitable to the words 'through terror.' Perhaps the word for 'cliff' was selected in preference to that for 'rock' on account of the specially religious acceptation of the latter term (e.g., Deut. xxxii. 31).——**The signal**] The sight of the signal-pole, which formed the Jewish rallying-point (xiii. 2), shall throw the Assyrian princes into a panic.——**Fire . . . furnace**] Not with reference to the altar of sacrifice (comp. xxix. 1?), for 'furnace' is never used in this connection, but symbolically of the light of Jehovah's presence, which is a protection to his friends, a destruction to his enemies (Del.). Comp. x. 17.

CHAPTER XXXII.

Vv. 1–8 ought clearly to be separated from *vv.* 9–20. They correspond to the close of another great anti-Assyrian prophecy—chap. xi., and describe the happy condition of Judah when idols have been cast away (xxxi. 7), and the rod of Assyrian tyranny has been removed. A more just and merciful government—nay, an absolutely perfect government—shall then be enjoyed, the result (as we must infer from xxxii. 15), of a large outpouring of the divine Spirit. 'As the consequence of this, moral distinctions shall no longer be confounded, men shall be estimated at their real value; a general prediction, which is here applied to two specific cases, *vv.* 5–8' (Alexander).—The prophecy is Messianic, but not in the narrower sense which has been derived from a mistranslation of *v.* 2. It seems as if Isaiah sometimes (comp. xlxiii. 17) cherished the hope that the hereditary wearer of the Davidic crown would prove a worthy vicegerent of the supreme King, Jehovah. All prophecy is conditional. The tone of Isaiah in another prophecy written probably in the same period (x. 5–xi.), but somewhat later, seems to me to prove that there had really been an outpouring of the divine Spirit on the ruling class of Jerusalem (comp. Introd. to chap. xxii., end). If Hezekiah had been capable of receiving the Messianic gifts in full measure, the prediction in ix. 6, 7, would have been (from the prophetic point of view) sufficiently fulfilled in him. When Isaiah wrote xxxii. 1, he may have had grounds for the charitable belief that his sovereign would really be equal to the demands providentially made upon him. All that was certain to him was the coming of a new era for Israel and for the world, and whether the leadership of Israel would then be granted to the natural heir of David, or to Another, depended on Hezekiah's responsible exercise of his free will.

[1] Behold, righteously the king shall reign, and the princes
justly shall they rule; [2] and [a]a great man[a] shall be as a hiding-
place from the wind, and a covert from the rain-storm, as rivulets
in a parched land, as the shadow of a huge cliff in a thirsty

[a] A man, Kay. Vir (ille), Vitr.—Each one, Ges., Ew., Del., Naeg.

1-8 Regenerate Judah.

1 **The king**] Or rather, royalty—putting aside the person altogether (as in xxxiii. 17). If Hezekiah is meant, his character has been purged of its dross. At any rate, nothing indicates that the Messiah is intended; king and princes are placed quite on a level, in accordance with the actual state of things under the so-called Monarchy. Indeed, the character of the 'princes' is of almost more importance than that of the king—hence the stress laid in the foll. verses on the changed character of the governing classes. Contrast the rebuke in iii. 14, 15.

2 **A great man**] Strictly, anyone (king or prince) who belongs to the

land. [3] And the eyes of those who see shall not be closed, and the ears of those who hear shall hearken; [4] and the heart of the hasty shall perceive distinctly, and the tongue of the stammerers shall be prompt to speak plainly. [5] No more shall the fool be called noble, and the knave shall no more be named gentle. [6] For the fool speaketh folly, and his heart maketh wickedness, to practise profanity, and utter error concerning Jehovah, to make empty the soul of the hungry, and to cause the drink of the thirsty to fail; [7] and the machinations of the knave are evil, it is he who deviseth plots, to destroy the afflicted by lying words, even when the poor speaketh that which is right, [8] but the noble deviseth noble things, and *he* to noble things shall stand.

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vv. 9-20. A supplementary address to the women, gathered, we may suppose, at a little distance from the rest, and testifying their indifference (comp. iii. 16-24). The prophet warns them that their self-pleasing and security will not last much longer. He then describes the impending judgment, and contrasts the true security with the false. There is a point of contact with the foregoing long prophecy in *v.* 15 (see note).

[9] Ye women who are at ease, rise up, hear my voice; ye [b]confident daughters, give ear unto my speech. [10] In a year

[b] Self-flattering, Weir.

class of great men (ἄνδρες). Against the rend. 'each one,' see Dr. Kay's note.

[3] A spiritual change described in symbols. **Those who see . . .**] who ought to see, but are judicially hardened (xxix. 10).

[4] **The heart**] i.e., the mind (see especially 1 Kings x. 2, 24).—— **Hasty**] Precipitate in decisions, perhaps with an allusion to the Egyptian alliance (Weir). (Same word differently applied, xxxv. 4). —— **The stammerers**] Those whose thoughts and words are indefinite and inconsistent (Del.); not, mockers, comp. xxviii. 14, &c. (Knob., Drechsler).

[5-8] Obs. the undercurrent of irony towards the governing classes; also the growing tendency to the proverbial style (see on xxviii. 23-29, xxxi. 2).——**The fool**] i.e., the ungodly man, sin being the highest folly; see *v.* 6.——**Noble. . . . gentle**] In rank; not here in character.

[6] **Error**] Dr. Weir renders 'heresy.' In fact, in Rabbinic Hebr. and in Aramaic the stem does acquire the meaning of heresy, (and in Assyrian, of madness); here, however, it is rather 'practical atheism' which is meant, comp. xxix. 15, Ps. xiv. 1. A similar phrase in xxix. 24.——**To make empty the soul . . .**] To deprive him of that which would satisfy his needs (see xxix. 8). Compare the character of 'Nabal' (= Fool), 1 Sam. xxv.

[9] **Who are at ease**] i.e., unconcerned. Always in a bad sense (Am. vi. 1, Zech. i. 15, Ps. cxxiii. 4), except *v.* 18 and xxxiii. 20.—— **Confident**] In a bad sense, compare Am. vi. 1, 'who are confident in the mountain of Samaria.' In a good sense, xii. 2, Ps. xxvii. 3.

[10] **In a year and days**] Lit.,

and days ye shall shudder, ye confident ones; for the vintage is consumed, the fruit-gathering cometh not. [11] Tremble, ye that are at ease; shudder, ye confident ones; strip you, and make you bare, and gird sackcloth upon your loins. [12] They shall smite upon the breasts for the pleasant fields, for the fruitful vine. [13] Upon the land of my people thorns and briars shall come up; yea, upon all joyous houses of the merry town. [14] For the palace shall be forsaken; the hum of the city shall be deserted; the mound and the watch-tower shall be instead of caves for ever, the joy of wild asses, the pasture of flocks, [15] until the spirit be poured out upon us from on high; and the pasture-country shall become a garden-land, and the garden-land shall be counted for a forest, [16] and justice shall inhabit the pasture-country, and righteousness

(Add) days (whether many, as Num. ix. 22 *Q. P. B.*, or few, as Gen. xxiv. 55) to a year. Comp. on xxix. 1.

[11] **Strip you**] See on xx. 2.

[12] **They shall smite . . .**] A participle in the masc. gender. 'Upon the breasts,' for the sake of a play upon words (*shaddyim* 'breasts,' *s'dé* 'fields').

[14] **The palace shall be forsaken . . .**] Another illustration of the vagueness of the outlines of Messianic prophecy (comp. *I. C. A.*, p. 79). In the rest of this group of prophecies (xxix. 5, xxx. 19, xxxi. 4), Isaiah apparently anticipates that Jerusalem will be delivered from the Assyrians, but here that it will be destroyed, and lie for some time in ruins. The consequence is that the Messianic blessedness which is elsewhere drawn closely together with the present, is here thrown into an indefinitely distant future. There are points of contact, however, with earlier prophecies, which show that anticipations of this gloomier kind were frequent visitors to Isaiah (v. 9, 10, vi. 11-13), and connecting as he did the political future with the moral state of his country, it was natural that the variations in his view of the latter should reflect themselves in his view of the former. Parallel for the prediction of the destruction of Jerusalem, Mic. iii. 12, comp. iv. 1.——**The mound**] Hebr. *'ophel*, which was the name of the steep southern side of the temple-hill.——**The watch-tower**] i.e., perhaps the 'tower of the flock,' mentioned in Mic. iv. 8, in connection with 'the hill' (*I. C. A.*, p. 79).——**Wild asses**] which haunted the desert (Job xxiv. 5); they have now disappeared from Palestine.

[15] **Until the spirit . . .**] 'The spirit giveth life,' is the key to this passage. The saying about Lebanon's becoming a garden-land was probably a favourite one with Isaiah (see on xxix. 17). It may of course be taken either literally or symbolically, but is best explained (as remarked already) of a transformation of nature which goes hand in hand with that of man. The implication is that the life-giving Spirit had been (i.e., would be) withdrawn not only from the Jews, but from their land. Both people and country were (i.e., would be) reduced by oppression to a mere shadow of what they had been, far as even this was from what they were destined to be.

[16] The inward blessings shall correspond to the outward. Wherever there are human dwellings, be

shall dwell in the garden-land, [17] and the fruit of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and confidence for ever, [18] and my people shall inhabit a home of peace, and dwellings of confidence, and easeful resting-places; [19] but it shall hail, when the forest cometh down, and the city shall sink in abasement. [20] Happy are ye who sow beside all waters, who let loose the foot of the ox and the ass!

they in the uncultivated pasture-land or in the fruitful garden-land, justice and righteousness shall be house-mates.

[17] Allusion in James iii. 18; **Peace**] In the objective sense = welfare.

[18] **Of Confidence . . . easeful**] Comp. *vv.* 9–11, xxxiii. 20.

[19] But last of all the prophet must remind his readers that the way to this ideal state lies through bitter suffering. The 'hail' of God's judgments shall descend on the forest, and 'the city' shall be utterly abased. Expositors seem to be agreed that the 'forest' means the stately army of Assyria (comp. x. 18, 19, 33, 34), and only to differ as to the reference of 'the city,' which most critics suppose to be Jerusalem, but Lowth and Ges. take to be Nineveh, Drechsler and Naeg. the city in which the hostility of the world to Jehovah will in the latter days be centralised, comp. xxv. 2, xxvi. 5, 6, xxvii. 10, 11. The latter view, however, in both its forms, is very improbable, because the fate of Nineveh, or of the future metropolis of antitheism, is nowhere else referred to in this group of prophecies. Still the transition from the 'forest' of Assyria to the 'city' of Jerusalem would be peculiarly abrupt, and is not to be assumed except under compulsion. It is usual, indeed, to compare (see above) certain passages in which Assyria is likened to a forest, but is there any reason why the same figure should not be applied to Judah? A very similar one *is so applied*, in ii. 13 (at once literal and symbolical), vi. 13, xi. 1. I therefore take the forest to be a symbol of the proud and scornful rulers of Judah, to whose imminent judgment Isaiah actually refers under the figure of hail in xxviii. 17.

[20] 'Happy days will those be for the tillers of the soil!' A weak conclusion, it may seem at first sight, but we must consider the sufferings caused by the all but total extinction of agriculture during the Assyrian invasion. Besides, agricultural prosperity is one of the most constant and prominent features in Messianic descriptions. Dr. Weir explains rather differently. 'Happy they who go steadily on, doing the work committed to them by God, alike in storm and in sunshine, confiding in the righteousness of God.' He compares the close of chap. xxviii., and Eccles. xi. 1, 6.——**Beside all waters**] For there will be irrigation everywhere (xxx. 25), and unchecked freedom in tilling the soil.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

RETRIBUTION to Assyria; Israel's extremity, Jehovah's opportunity; the hope of a glorious future—but not for unbelievers. (See detailed analysis, *I. C. A.*, p. 97.)—Date, the 26th year of Hezekiah, B.C. 701, in which year the cuneiform inscriptions place the invasion of Sennacherib. The

prophecy is highly figurative in style, and often obscure. Ewald has a strong impression that it is not the work of Isaiah, but of one of Isaiah's disciples. There are, no doubt, a few peculiarities of phraseology (see Ewald's *Prophets*, ii. 254); but, as Ewald himself admits, there are other phrases specially characteristic of Isaiah, and the entire spirit reminds us of that prophet. Few, however, will deny that the style is less uniformly sustained than usual, and it seems to me a permissible conjecture that Isaiah has left this prophecy imperfectly prepared for publication. The essentials, however, of a true prophetic revelation are all here.

[1] Woe unto thee who spoilest, and hast not been spoiled, and who dealest rapaciously, and they have not dealt rapaciously with thee! When thou shalt have ceased to spoil, thou shalt be spoiled; when thou shall have finished dealing rapaciously, they shall deal rapaciously with thee. [2] O Jehovah! be favourable unto us; for thee have we waited: be thou their arm every morning, our salvation also in the time of trouble. [3] At a tumultuous sound the peoples have fled; at the lifting up of thyself the nations are scattered; [4] and your spoil is gathered as when caterpillars gather; as when locusts run to and fro, he runneth upon it. [5] Jehovah is secure, for he dwelleth in the height; he hath filled Zion with justice and righteousness; [6] and the stedfastness of thy times shall be a store of salvations, (and) wisdom and knowledge: the fear of Jehovah is his treasure.

[1] **Woe unto thee . . .**] Assyria, who has dealt destruction to so many, shall at length suffer violence herself. Taking the two halves of the verse, this seems more probable than Hitzig's view that it is a complaint of unprovoked aggression.

[2] The prophet concentrates his moral energy on prayer, and is thus enabled to realize the certainty of what seemed so unlikely, the fall of Assyria.

[3] **At a tumultuous sound**] The word used suggests the image, not so much of thunder (Ew., Knob., Del.), as of the sound of many waters (comp. Jer. x. 13, Ezek. i. 24, Rev. xix. 6).——**The peoples**] As represented in the Assyrian army. ——**At the lifting up . . .**] So Num. x. 35, Ps. lxviii. 1.

[4] **Your spoil**] Addressed to the foe. Comp. *v.* 23.——**He runneth**] viz. the band of spoilers, or, distributively, each of its members.

[5] Two great spiritual facts: (1) Jehovah, by his deliverance of Zion (regarded here as past), has shown that he is **secure**, i.e., inaccessible to his enemies; and (2) **he hath filled Zion** with spiritual treasures, the Messianic promise of the Spirit (xxxii. 15, 16) being drawn together into one with the overthrow of the Assyrians.

[6] **Shall be**] i.e., shall consist in. ——**Thy times**] i.e., the 'changes and chances' of thy life (Ps. xxxi. 15). The pronoun refers to the people of Judah.——**A store of salvations**] ready for every need.——**His treasure**] With an implied rebuke to the treasure-loving kings of Judah; or, as others think, with an allusion to the large fine demanded by Sennacherib (? see p. 193).

[7] Behold, the heroes (?) cry without; the messengers of peace weep bitterly. [8] The highways are desolate; the wayfaring man hath ceased; he hath broken the covenant, despised cities, regardeth not men. [9] The land mourneth, languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed, dried up; Sharon is become like the desert, and Bashan and Carmel shake themselves. [10] Now will I rise, saith Jehovah; now will I exalt myself; now will I lift up myself. [11] Ye conceive hay, ye shall bring forth stubble; your breath is fire which shall devour you; [12] and peoples shall become (as if) burned to lime, thorns cut off, which are kindled with fire.

[7-12] The prophet has now sketched the main outlines of his revelation. It remains to fill in and apply the details. He first describes the apparently hopeless condition of Judah,—the mourning in the capital and the desolation in the country-districts.——**The heroes . . .**] Hebr. *arielim* 'the Ariels' (see on xxix. 1). The lion-hearts break down and 'cry.' (But I doubt the text: see *Notes and Criticisms* on the passage.) How truly Homeric is the scene! In fact, a childlike, emotional sensibility is characteristic of the heroic age everywhere. Comp. Judg. xx. 23, 1 Sam. xiii. 16 LXX.——**The messengers of peace**] Almost all are agreed in identifying these with the ambassadors sent by Hezekiah to Sennacherib at Lachish (2 Kings xviii. 14), but this is very doubtful (see p. 193). They 'weep bitterly' at the hard conditions of peace.

[8] The returning ambassadors are the last citizens who have ventured outside the walls. Comp. the parallel in Judg. v. 6. Then three short passionate clauses about the stern Assyrian, whom neither moral obligations, nor fear of physical force, nor respect for human life, can check.——**He hath broken the covenant**] This is obscure, but (if 1 Kings xviii. 14 relates to this invasion) may allude to a slightly later period, when it became clear that Sennacherib would not be satisfied with the payment of a fine. ——**Despised cities**] Explanatory of the first clause. Comp. 'They deride every stronghold,' Hab. i. 10.

[9] Here the strain becomes lyrical; in one verse we have assonance, personification, and even the 'pathetic fallacy.'——**Lebanon**] i.e., the Lebanon range of mountains (120 miles in length).——**Sharon**] 'The Sharon,' i.e., the lowland plain, which extends from Carmel on the north to below Joppa on the south.——**Bashan and Carmel**] The oaks of Bashan, and the 'deep jungles of copse' in the 'rocky dells' of Carmel are the only exceptions to the usual barrenness of the hills and vales of Palestine. Hence used as types of beauty and sublimity, xxxv. 2, ii. 13, Zech. xi. 2, Cant. vii. 5.——**Shake themselves**] It was now autumn; comp. *I. C. A.*, p. 98.

[10] This is the very moment for which Jehovah has been waiting. **Now will I rise**, viz. from my heavenly throne, comp. xviii. 4.

[11] **Ye conceive hay**] i.e., if ye cherish plans which are as futile as dried grass, **Ye shall bring forth stubble**, i.e., the result shall be no more lasting than stubble. A suggestive image, supplemented in the next clause. 'In the great scarcity of wood for fuel throughout the East, the *tannoor*, or oven, is usually heated with stubble or chaff.' ——**Breath**] i.e., fury, as xxv. 4, comp. Ps. x. 5, xii. 5. For the figure of fire, comp. i. 31, ix. 18. Similarly in xxx. 28, the breath of a furious man is compared to a torrent.

[12] **Peoples**] See on *v.* 3.

[13] Hear, ye that are far off, what I have done; and acknowledge ye that are near, my might. [14] The sinners are horror-stricken in Zion, shuddering seizeth the profane: 'Oh, who can tarry with devouring fire? oh, who can tarry with perpetual burnings?' [15] He who walketh in perfect righteousness, and speaketh uprightness; he who rejecteth the gain of oppressions, who shaketh his hands not to hold bribes, who stoppeth his ear not to hear of bloodshed, and closeth his eyes not to look on evil; [16] he shall inhabit heights, fortresses of rocks shall be his place of security; his bread is continually given him, his water faileth not. [17] The king in his beauty shall thine eyes behold; they shall see a land of distances. [18] Thy

[13] The prophet changes his point of view. He has been hitherto working with the reproductive imagination, though not, perhaps, without notes of discourses actually delivered. Now he places himself in the historical present, and calls on all nations to recognise the far-reaching importance of Jehovah's wonderful work. For it shows who is the true and only God.

[14] Now (returning to the past) the once unbelieving Jews begin to 'understand' the 'Tidings' of the prophet; but it is 'purely a terror' (xxviii. 19). For it was not merely the Assyrians on whom Isaiah pronounced God's judgment, but the immoral and irreligious Israelites. Hence they apply to themselves the prophecy of the 'furnace in Jerusalem' (xxxi. 9), the oven of the divine wrath, of which their sins have furnished the fuel, the chaff and the stubble.——**Oh, who can tarry . . .**] (Lit., sojourn, as Ps. xv. 1.) 'Who can dwell safely in the neighbourhood of the avenging God?' For only that which willingly yields itself to be God's organ can abide those flames (comp. the burning bush, Ex. iii. 2). See on x. 17, xxx. 27. 'Perpetual burnings,' not with reference to the eternity of the punishment (comp. on lxvi. 24), but because the fire of Jehovah's self-manifesting love and wrath is, like himself, eternal. There is a good analogy in the perpetual fire on the altar of burnt-offering (Lev. vi. 13, Hebr. 6). That the 'fire' is symbolical, is evident from the next verse, containing what is practically the prophet's answer to the question of the unbelievers.

[16] **Inhabit heights**] Instead of saying that the pious man can joyfully exist in the light of this Fire, he introduces a new figure of inaccessible rocky heights. The picture of the righteous man reminds us forcibly of Ps. xv., also of Ps. xxiv. 3, 4.——**His bread . . .**] The promise goes beyond that in xxx. 20, for it is implied that the bread and the water should not be 'in scant measure.' Both come from an inexhaustible store (comp. Jer. xv. 18). We are already in the atmosphere of the Messianic age. Still more evidently is this the case in *v.* 17.

[17] **The king in his beauty**] Not Jehovah (Targ., Vitr., Hend.) in spite of *v.* 22, for the word 'beauty' is never (except once in a doubtful passage, Zech. ix. 17) applied to God, but Hezekiah (comp. xxxii. 1), not, however, as a type of the Messiah (as Calv., &c.), for there is not a vestige of a *personally* Messianic reference in the rest of the chapter, but simply as the reigning king of Judah. The 'beauty' spoken of is not that of state-robes (Knob.), nor that of recovered health after Hezekiah's well-known illness (Hitz.); but an ideal beauty, the evidence of God's extraordinary

heart shall meditate on the terror: 'Where is he who registered? where, he who weighed? where, he who counted the towers?' [19] The barbarous people thou shalt not see—the people obscure of speech, not to be heard—of a stammering tongue, not to be understood. [20] Behold Zion, the city of our festal assembly! thine eyes shall see Jerusalem (like) an easeful home, a tent that removeth not, whose pegs are never drawn out, and none of whose cords become rent. [21] But [a]there Jehovah shall be in majesty for us,—[b]a place of[b] rivers and canals, broad on both hands, into which oared galley shall never go, neither shall majestic ship pass thereon. [22] For

[a] The name of, Sept., Pesh., Lowth (a different vowel).
[b] Instead of, Ges., Hitz., Ew.

favour (as Ps. xlv. 2).——**They shall see a land of distances**] i.e., perhaps, the boundaries of the kingdom of Israel shall be extended as far as the eyes can reach. A similar hope is held out in xi. 14 (Hendewerk), and in xxvi. 15 (note the verb); but the closest parallel is Gen. xiii. 14, 15, which has been almost overlooked.

[18] *Et hæc olim meminisse juvabit*; they shall look back on the past ('the terror') as on a bad dream. Obs., the deep impression made by the elaborate subdivision of the Assyrian offices.——**He who registered**] viz. the amounts of tribute to be paid.——**Weighed**] i.e., tested the weight of the gold and silver paid.——**Counted the towers**] i.e., made a recognizance of the city to be besieged.—A contemporary psalmist bids the Jews 'count the towers' with a different object, viz. to convince themselves that the city is uninjured (Ps. xlviii. 13).

[19] **The barbarous people**] *βάρβαροι*. See on xxviii. 11.——**Not to be heard**] 'to hear' = to understand (xxxvi. 11). Comp. Slav = 'speaking' (i.e., intelligible to his own people), in opposition to 'the dumb,' i.e. the Germans (Pott, *Die Ungleichheit menschlicher Rassen*, p. 70).

[20] **Behold Zion**] The imperative here conveys an earnest assurance, as xxxi. 6 (?), xxxvii. 30, and in a very similar context Ps. cxxviii. 5. ——**Easeful**] As xxxii. 18.——**That removeth not**] The men of Jerusalem having been threatened with deportation (xxxvi. 17). Comp. 2 Sam. vii. 10, Am. ix. 15.

[21] **In majesty**] Jehovah's 'majesty' is no idle quality; it is protection to his friends, and destruction to his enemies. See x. 31, 1 Sam. iv. 8, Ex. xv. 6, 11.——**A place of rivers**] i.e. Jehovah as 'the majestic one' (= the Face of Jehovah) shall compensate for the want of those broad streams which protected other cities (comp. Nah. iii. 8, Jer. li. 13). A similar conception in Zech. ii. 4, 5, 'I will be unto her a wall of fire round about'; comp. Ps. xxxi. 21. Still more closely parallel is 'Ps. xlvi. 4 (written, possibly, by Isaiah himself after the overthrow of Sennacherib), "The streams of a river make glad the city of God," that is, not the fountain of Shiloah, but the gracious influences of the Divine presence' (*I. C. A.*, p. 101).——**Canals**] Heb. *y'ōrīm*. The plural of the word used in Genesis and elsewhere of the Nile, and of the Tigris in Dan. xii. 5–7; comp. Egyptian *aur* 'stream,' Accadian *ari* = Assyrian *naharu* 'river.'——**Majestic ship**] (Same epithet as above of Jehovah.) In Ps. xlviii. (written at the same

Jehovah our judge, Jehovah our governor, Jehovah our king—
he will save us. [23] Thy ropes have become loose; they
cannot hold upright their mast, nor keep the flag spread out—
then shall the spoil of plundering be divided in abundance;
(even) the lame shall seize upon a prey. [24] And no inhabit-
ant shall say, I am sick: the people which dwelleth therein
hath its iniquity forgiven.

time as Ps. xlvi., see above), we meet with the 'breaking of the ships of Tarshish' (*v.* 7), of course metaphorically, of the Assyrians.

[23] **Jehovah our king**] Among the Israelites, as among the other Semitic nations, the earthly king (*v.* 17) is but the representative of the divine. Comp. Ps. xlviii. 2. See Riehm, *Messianic Prophecy*, pp. 66, 67.

[23] **Thy ropes have become loose**] 'Addressed to Zion. In *v.* 20 she was conceived of as a tent; here she is represented under the image of a ship, an image which lies more apart, but was suggested by *v.* 21. The enemies have a proud, well-rigged ship, but nevertheless, accomplish nothing. Zion, on the other hand, is like a ship out of repair, but in spite of this will gain the victory' (Drechsler). As Del. remarks, the ordinary view, which explains the passage of Assyria, is excluded by the feminine pronominal suffix, which belongs to a land or city, not to a people. (The Assyrians are only referred to as a people). —— **The spoil of plundering**] Two synonyms to express variety.——**The lame . . .**] Judah the Maccabee shared the spoil with the maimed, the orphans, &c., 2 Macc. viii. 30. But here the lame themselves secure their portion.

[24] **No inhabitant shall say, I am sick . . .**] This is not to be combined with the preceding verse, as if it meant that the sick will forget their sufferings out of sympathy with the joy of the nation. It is rather a Messianic feature. Sin and its punishment are to cease together. See xxxv. 5, 6, lxv. 20, and comp. Mark ii. 10, 11, 'But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,) I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy way into thine house.' It is a *very* far-fetched reference which Hitz., Knob. find to the Assyrian plague.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

THE Divine judgment upon the world, out of which (as in lxiii. 1–6) one specially important scene is singled, the judgment upon Israel's inveterate foes, the Edomites. Comp. for the feelings here expressed towards the latter, Ezek. xxv. 12, xxxv., Ob. 10–16, Mal. i. 2–5, Ps. cxxxvii. 7.

There are striking parallels between chaps. xxxiv., xxxv. and Zephaniah, and between chap. xxxiv. and parts of Jeremiah (Jer. xlvi. 3–12, xxv., and l., li., which are of great critical importance. On these, and on the relation between chap. xxxiv. and chap. xiii., see the very thorough essay of Caspari, *Zeitschr. f. lutherische Theologie*, 1843, Heft 2, but comp. Budde, *Jahrbücher f. deutsche Theologie*, 1878, Heft 4. See also the remarks in *I. C. A.*, p. 112.

[1] Come near, ye nations, to hear, and ye peoples, attend; let the earth hear, and the fullness thereof, the world and all things that spring out of it. [2] For Jehovah hath indignation against all the nations, and wrath against all their host: he hath laid them under the ban, he hath given them over to slaughter. [3] And their slain shall be cast forth, and their carcases—the stink of them shall go up, and mountains shall melt with their blood. [4] And all the host of heaven shall rot, and the heavens shall roll up as a scroll, and all their host shall fade, as foliage fadeth from the vine, and as fading leaves from the fig-tree. [5] For my sword hath been bathed in heaven; behold, upon Edom shall it come down, and upon the people of my ban to judgment. [6] The sword of Jehovah is become full of blood, and moistened with fat; with the blood of lambs and he-goats, with the kidney-fat of rams:

[1] Universal nature is summoned as a witness of the divine judgment, as i. 2, Ps. l. 4, &c., though, as *v.* 2 states, it is only humanity which is directly concerned.

[2] **Indignation . . . wrath**] It is noteworthy that these words only occur in the parts of Isaiah which are of disputed authorship. See, for the former, liv. 8, lx. 10; for the latter, xxvii. 4 (text doubtful), xlii. 25, li. 17, lix. 18, lxiii. 3, lxvi. 15. In the acknowledged works of Isaiah, 'the anger of Jehovah,' is the phrase employed. —— **All their host**] Somewhat vaguely used, as in Gen. ii. 1. There is a special reason for the choice of the phrase here (see on *v.* 4).——**Laid under the ban**] as xi. 15, xxxvii. 11.

[3] **The mountains . . .**] Reversely parallel to Am. ix. 13 (end).

[4] The 'host of heaven' (star-spirits—see Appendix on chap. i.), and the host of the nations (*v.* 2), stand somewhat in the relation of suzerains and vassals; consequently they are associated both in guilt and in punishment. We have already found the same combination in xxiv. 21 (see note); here, however, the material aspect of the star-spirits is more emphasised, for they are represented as liable to corruption through fire.——**As a scroll**] A unique simile, reminding us of the later Stoic conception of the sky as a *βίβλος θεοῦ*, of which heavenly bodies are the *στοιχεῖα* or characters.

[5] **For**] i.e., In fact. Or, because:—'Jehovah's sword has sated itself in heaven, therefore, it will now descend to earth.' (Both meanings are included).——**My sword**] A symbolic phrase for the divine vengeance, for the origin of which see on xxvii. 1. Comp. especially Deut. xxxii. 41–43, which Drechsler thinks that our prophet had in his mind.——**Been bathed**] Lit., soaked, i.e., strictly, with blood (as in Deut. *l.c.* and Jer. xlvi. 10, but here, by a bold metaphor, with fury. The same verb (in Kal) is used of love in Prov. vii. 18, remarks Dr. Weir. The first objects of this fury are the host of heaven (*v.* 4).

[6] The perfects are those of prophetic certitude. For the figures, comp. Zeph. i. 7, Jer. xlvi. 10, Ezek. xxxix. 17–19.——**Lambs . . . he-goats . . . . rams**] Animals 'clean' according to the Levitical law, and therefore admissible for sacrifice. Compare the parallel in Jer. li. 40.——**Kidney-fat**] See Lev. iii. 4.

for Jehovah hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Edom. [7] And wild oxen shall be struck down with them, and bullocks with oxen; and their land shall become drunken with blood, and their dust moistened with fat. [8] For unto Jehovah belongeth a day of vengeance, and a year of recompense for the quarrel of Zion.

[9] And the torrents thereof shall turn into pitch, and its dust into brimstone, and the land thereof shall become burning pitch. [10] It shall remain unquenched night and day; the smoke thereof shall go up for ever; from generation to generation it shall lie waste; there shall be none passing

[7] **Wild oxen**] Hebr. *r'ēmīm*. An interesting word. Auth. Vers. renders 'unicorns,' which, however, is clearly wrong, for in Deut. xxxiii. 17 the *r'ēm* (singular) is said to have horns (A. V. evades this by misrendering 'unicorns'). The characteristics of the *r'ēm* in the Old Testament are its splendid horns; its great size and height; its untameableness; and its mountainous haunts.—These may suggest that it is the buffalo; but this cannot be, for 1. the buffalo can be tamed, and 2. it penetrated westward from India in comparatively recent times.—Most modern German commentators (e.g., Ew., Del., Kalisch) have thought of the oryx, or more precisely, the *Antilope leucoryx*, for which they claim the authority of passages in the Talmud (see Del. on Job xxxix. 9), and the analogy of the Arabic *rîm*, which is now used in Syria for the white and yellow gazelle. The objection is that the oryx too is tameable, as the Egyptians found (Wilkinson's *Egyptians*, i. 227).—Mr. Houghton, a zoologist as well as an Assyrian scholar, has shown by an examination of the Assyrian bas-reliefs and inscriptions, that the Assyrian *rîmu* belonged to the genus Bos, not to that of Bison, and as the locality specified for the *rîmu* by the Assyrians[1] is just where it ought to be from the point of view of the Old Testament, we may accept his decision as to the rendering of the Hebrew word as final. Auroch or wild bull then is the meaning.—We are of course bound to account for the divergent Arabic use of the term, but that is easily done. This kind of wild bull is now extinct, and the oryx, from its size and general aspect, is the natural legatee of its name.—**Be struck down**] Lit., go down. Comp. Jer. l. 27, li. 40, also xlviii. 15. Naeg. denies that the word has quite the same shade of meaning as there, but why? The Hebr. *yārad lattābhakh* surely means 'to be felled unto (so as to fall into) the slaughtering-trough.'—**Wild oxen . . . bullocks . . . oxen**] i.e., the chiefs of the Edomites, as opposed to the small cattle or the people (*v.* 6).

[8] Parallel: lxiii. 4 (lxi. 2).

[9, 10] The figures are suggested partly by the volcanic phenomena of Idumæa, and partly by its proximity to the site of Sodom and Gomorrah (see Jer. xlix. 18); imitated in Rev. xiv. 10, 11, xix. 3.—The eternity of the desolation is four times asserted. This may fairly be adduced as a subsidiary argument for the eschatological reference of the chapter:—by itself

[1] On the broken obelisk attributed to Assur-naçir-pal, *rîmi* are said to exist 'opposite the land of the Khatti, and at the foot of Lebanon;' see Mr. Houghton, *Bible Educator*, ii. 24–29. (It is to be regretted th t the international character of philology is not more fully recognised in Germany.)

through it to all eternity. [11] And the pelican and the hedgehog shall take possession thereof; the eagle-owl and the raven shall dwell therein; and he shall stretch out upon it the line of chaos, and the plummet of desolation. [12] [a]They shall call the nobles of the kingdom, but there shall be none there,[a] and all Edom's princes shall be no more. [13] And its castles shall spring up in thorns; nettles and thistles shall be in its fortresses; and it shall become a dwelling-place of jackals, and a district for ostriches. [14] And wild cats shall meet wolves, and one satyr shall call to the other; surely there shall the night-fairy repose, and find for herself a resting-place. [15] There shall the arrow-snake make its nest, and

[a] So Weir, by a transposition.—Hebr. text, As for its nobles, none shall be there to proclaim the kingdom (Ges., Ew., Naeg.); or, . . . whom they might call to the kingdom (Vitr., Hitz.). Del.'s rend. ('As for its nobles, no kingdom shall be there which they might proclaim') is against the parallelism.

it would be insufficient to prove it. The fall of Edom coincides with the fall of the whole antitheistic world.

[11 17] A fresh series of images, inconsistent, strictly speaking, with the foregoing. Comp. xiii. 20–22, xiv. 23, Zeph. ii. 14.

[11] **The eagle-owl**] 'A magnificent species inhabiting ruins and caves in every part of Palestine' (Mr. Houghton).——**He shall stretch out . . . .**] The same image in Am. vii. 7–9. The work of destruction is to be carried out with the same thoroughness as that of building. The subject of the verb is Jehovah.——**Chaos . . . . desolation**] Hebr. *tōhū . . . . bōhū*, the two words which together express the idea of chaos, Gen. i. 2, comp. Jer. iv. 23.

[12] **The nobles of the kingdom**] It is inferred from this passage and from Gen. xxxvi. 31–43, that Edom was under an elective monarchy, the electors being the chiefs of the tribes. The text-reading is harsh, but gives the same sense; 'the kingdom' in this case means the newly elected king.

[13] **A district**] The rendering 'grass' will not suit the mention of 'ostriches,' which do not eat grass.

[14] **Wild cats . . . wolves . . . satyr**] See on xiii. 21, 22.——**The night-fairy**] Hebr., *lîlîth*. Another popular superstition, analogous to that of the *'alukah* or vampire of Prov. xxx. 15 (comp. Targ. of Ps. xii. 9), and still more exactly corresponding to that of the *lîl* and *lîlît* of the Assyrians and Babylonians, the latter being names of male and female demons who were thought to persecute men and women in their sleep (Lenormant, *La magie*, &c., p. 36). Mixed with Persian elements, it existed among the Jews of Mesopotamia as late as the seventh century A.D. (Levy, *Zeitschr. d. d. m. Gesellschaft*, ix. 461–491). The Rabbinical stories about Lilith may be found in Buxtorf (*Lex. Talm.*, s. v.). She was said to have been Adam's first wife, who flew away from him (comp. the Greek myth of Lamia), and became a demon. Her passion was, like that of Lamia and the Strigæ, to murder young children. —Goethe's version of the story, in the Walpurgis night-scene of *Faust* is therefore not strictly accurate. The Targum of Job i. 15 gives a new and enigmatical turn to the story; 'Sheba' (A. V. Sabeans) it renders 'by Lilith, Queen of Zemargad' (= smaragd), identifying the wise Queen of Sheba with the queen of the demons! (See Grätz's *Monatsschrift*, 1870, pp. 187–9.)

hatch, and lay, and gather within her shadow; surely there shall the vultures assemble, [b](they shall join) everyone his fellow.[b] 16 [c]Seek ye out from the book of Jehovah, and read[c]; not one of these is missing, none shall lack its fellow, for [d]my mouth[d] it hath commanded, and his breath hath brought them together. 17 And *he* hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them with the line: for ever shall they possess it, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.

[b] (I suppose a verb to have fallen out of the text).—Everyone with his fellow, Ges., Hitz., Ew., Naeg.

[c] According to their number Jehovah calleth them, Knob., Kuenen. (These critics read 'they seek' for 'seek ye out,' and attach it to the preceding verse. So, too, Sept., continuing in *v.* 16: 'By number they passed by').

[d] His mouth, A few MSS., Pesh., Ew.—Sept. has simply, the LORD.

16 **Seek ye out from the book of Jehovah** . . .] i.e., when the time of fulfilment has come, refer to the prophecy, and see how exactly all its details have been realised. The phrase 'book of Jehovah' is remarkable. Does it mean the prophecy on Edom by itself (comp. viii. 16, 20, xxx. 8), or a collection of Isaianic prophecies, in which this was included, or a collection of various prophetic writings—in fact, a prophetic canon—in which a book of Isaiah was contained? Any one of these three views is admissible, for even a single prophecy might be called a book or roll (comp. Jer. li. 60). But the position of chap. xxxiv., with its supplement chap. xxxv., inclines me to prefer the second one.—The LXX. has a very singular rendering of this verse, which has given Knobel a basis for reconstructing the text. That a verb has fallen out at the end of *v.* 15, is not improbable, but his objection to *v.* 16 seems ultimately to depend on his opinion as to the date of the prophecy. To me the text of *v.* 15 wears all the appearance of genuineness. Kuenen, a high authority, thinks otherwise; but is he not unconsciously prejudiced by his views as to the formation of the canon? See his *Historisch-kritisch Onderzoek*, iii. 399 (in section on the collection of the Old Test. books). The Sept. at any rate gives a very meagre first clause in *v.* 16.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THIS is a description, not of the joyous return of the Jewish exiles from Babylonia (an inveterate error which I fear will not soon be eradicated), but of the glorious condition of Israel after the Return, which the prophet involuntarily identifies with the Messianic age. The details of the description are partly to be taken literally, partly symbolically (see on xl. 11, xli. 18, lv. 12, 13). A transformation of the natural world is to accompany that of the spiritual (see on xxxii. 15, 16). The return

spoken of in the last verse is that of the Jews who remained in dispersion even after the Return from Babylonia.

This is, I think, the only explanation which does justice to the group of prophecies of which chap. xxxv. forms a part (see on xl. 11, xli. 18, lv. 12, 13).

Is this prophecy to be connected with the foregoing one? The recurrence of the expression 'the dwelling-place of jackals' (xxxv. 7, comp. xxxiv. 13), merely proves that the author of chap. xxxv. was familiar with chap. xxxiv. The pronoun-suffix of the verb in *v.* 1 is purely imaginary (see Del.'s note), and the chapter is perfectly intelligible by itself. On the other hand, parallels to Zephaniah occur both in chap. xxxiv. and in chap. xxxv. There is also a suitableness in the juxtaposition of the chapters; it produces a fine contrast, though the transition is abrupt. In short, there is a connection, though not so close a one, as some have supposed. The case is rather like that of xvii. 12–14 and xviii.

[1] The wilderness and the parched land shall rejoice, and
the desert shall exult and blossom like the narcissus. [2] It
shall richly blossom and exult, yea, exult and ring out a cry;
Lebanon's glory shall be given unto it, the splendour of
Carmel and Sharon; they shall see the glory of Jehovah, the
splendour of our God. [3] Strengthen ye the slack hands, and
the tottering knees make firm. [4] Say unto those who are of
a [a]despairing heart, Be strong, fear not; behold, your God
cometh for vengeance, for a godlike recompence; *he* cometh to
save you. [5] Then shall the eyes of the blind be opened, and
the ears of the deaf unstopped. [6] Then shall the lame man
leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb ring out a cry,

[a] Lit., hasty (comp. xxxii. 4).

[1] **The desert**] See on xxxii. 15. Rutgers (*De echtheid van het tweede gedeelte van Jesaja*, p. 171), has well pointed out the inconsistency of taking the 'blind' and the 'deaf' symbolically (*v.* 5), and the 'parched land' and 'the desert' literally.

[1] **Like the narcissus**] Springing up in rich abundance. Mr. Houghton has settled the question of the rendering, so far as this is possible. See *Bible Educator*, vol. ii.

[2] The fairest parts of the Holy Land shall, as it were, share their beauty with less favoured districts. 'The Carmel' and 'the Sharon' are mentioned together, not merely because both are beautiful districts, but because they adjoin each other (see on xxxiii. 9).——**The glory of Jehovah**] i.e., the manifestation of his creative power.

[3] The **slack hands** and **tottering knees** are evidently figurative (see next verse). The prophet generally, if not always, gives us a hint when we are *not* to interpret his descriptions literally.

[4, 6]*a*. Similar expressions, but purely symbolical, in xxxii. 3, 4. It is singular that the removal of human infirmities should occupy so small a portion of the Messianic descriptions in comparison with the 'restitution' of external nature. It could not, of course, be omitted altogether. Comp. xxxiii. 24.

because waters have broken out in the wilderness, and torrents in the desert. [7] And the mirage shall become a lake, and the thirsty land springs of water; in the dwelling-place of jackals, the grass shall spring up into reeds and rushes. [8] And a raised way shall be there, and it shall be called, The holy way; that which is unclean shall not pass over it, [b]and * * walking in the way, and [b] even fools shall not go astray. [9] No lion shall be there, neither shall the most violent of beasts go up thereon; no such shall be found there; and the released shall walk there. [10] And the freed ones of Jehovah shall return and come to Zion with a ringing sound,

[b] Lit., and he for them walking (sing.) in the way.—And since He goeth on the way for them, Ew.—Since it is destined for them (for his people, Weir, comp. Ps. xxviii. 8, Sept.); whosoever walketh in the way, Del., Naeg.

[6]*b.* **Because . . .**] A similar reason is given in a similar case, xliii. 20. Comp. Ps. cvii. 33, 35.

[7] **The mirage . . .**] Hebr. *sārâb*, Arab. *sarâb*. One of the noblest images, as Tholuck well says, of the Messianic age. It only occurs once again (xlix. 10); Arabic poets, as is only natural, often refer to the phenomenon. Comp. Korán, Sura xxiv. 39.—— **The grass**] Same word *apparently* as in xxxiv. 13 (*khātsîr*), whence Drechsler infers that a contrast is intended between the lot of Edom and of Israel. But the word is probably used in different senses in the two passages, there meaning a place fenced about, here grass. Even the grass is to have an intensified vitality; it is to grow up into reeds and rushes in that well-watered soil: comp. Job viii. 11.

[8] **A raised way**] How it is to be produced, we need not ask:—the whole atmosphere of the prophecy is supernatural. See xlix. 11, and note on xl. 3. The purpose of the highway is more liable to dispute. Most think it is for the returning exiles. Rather it is a road for pilgrims to the house of Jehovah (comp. xix. 23). Hence as Naeg. well observes, the emphasis laid on the sacred character of the persons or objects passing over it.——**That which is unclean** is surely not to be limited (Knob.) to the heathen. Not all Jews are admitted to the Messianic blessings, and not all heathen are excluded from them, is the doctrine of this group of prophecies. Comp. xliv. 5, lxvi. 3. Still there is probably an allusion to the forced entrances of heathen invaders of Judah, as in Joel iii. 17. After this comes a clause of which I cannot give a satisfactory explanation. Neither Ew. nor Del. can make the words 'for them' seem natural. Dr. Weir's correction is easy, but the errors of the text probably go further. There is a family likeness in corrupt passages. ——**The released shall walk there**] Released from all trouble, and fear of trouble, the cleansed Israelites (not perhaps excluding Gentiles) shall walk unmolested to and from the house of Jehovah. Comp. on lv. 12. 'Released,' Hebr. *g'ûlim*, occurs again only li. 10, lxii. 12 (comp. lxiii. 4), Ps. cvii. 2; 'freed' (*v.* 10), *p'dūyîm*, only li. 11.

[10] Comp. li. 11, lxi. 7, li. 3. **The freed ones of Jehovah shall return . . .**] Drechsler thinks that these are not the same persons as those mentioned in the last verse. According to him, 'the released' in *v.* 9 are the remnant of the population of Judah which has not perished in the judgments; the 'freed' in *v.* 10 are those brought back from exile. He is partly

and everlasting joy shall be upon their head; they shall overtake gladness and joy, trouble and sighing shall flee away.

right, for the 'return' spoken of in *v.* 10 has nothing to do with the highway of *v.* 8. But whether it points backward to the great Return from Babylon, or forward to the restoration of the many Jews who were still dispersed among the Gentiles (comp. Neh. v. 8), seems to me uncertain.——**Joy upon their head**] So, 'Thou hast crowned him with glory and honour' (Ps. viii. 5).——**They shall overtake . . .**] viz., that which they have so long pursued in vain.

CHAPTERS XXXVI.–XXXIX.

GENERAL HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION.

THE decipherment of the Assyrian inscriptions, which has thrown so much light on the undisputed works of the prophet Isaiah, has but revealed fresh difficulties in the mixture of prophecy and historic tradition before us. The principal of these arises from the newly-discovered fact that whereas, according to the Assyrian eponym Canon, Sennacherib only came to the throne in 705 B.C., the Old Testament (2 Kings and 'Isaiah') places his campaign against Judah as far back as 714. In this latter year, according to the Assyrian Canon, Sargon was still reigning; and though the same high authority admits an invasion of Judah by Sennacherib, it is as Sennacherib's third campaign, in the year 701, that the Canon and the royal inscriptions represent it. Hence a growing conviction on the part of Old Testament scholars that there must have been some misunderstanding on the part of the latest editor of the Hebrew traditions. 'The *least* change'—these are the words of Sir Henry Rawlinson in 1858—'is to substitute in the 13th verse of 2 Kings xviii. [= Isa. xxxvii. 1] the *twenty-seventh* for the "fourteenth" year of Hezekiah. We may suppose the error to have arisen from a correction made by a transcriber who regarded the invasion of Sennacherib and the illness of Hezekiah (which last was certainly in his fourteenth year) as synchronous, whereas the words "in those days" were in fact used with a good deal of latitude by the sacred writers. . . . If this view be taken, the second expedition [of Sennacherib against Judah] must have followed the first within one or at most two years, for Hezekiah reigned in all only 29 years.'[1]

This, however, is a hypothesis of exceptional boldness, and is not only contradicted by the absolute silence of Sennacherib's inscriptions as to a second Syrian campaign, but, as Prof. Birks remarks, 'seems disproved by almost every verse of the Biblical narrative.'[2] It is to the sagacious

[1] Prof. Rawlinson, *Herodotus*, first ed. (Lond. 1858) i. 479.

[2] Birks, *Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* (Lond. 1878), p. 377. Mr. Birks gives a list of not less than twenty reasons against Sir H. Rawlinson's hypothesis.

genius of the lamented Irish scholar, Dr. Edward Hincks, that the solution of the chronological problem is in all likelihood due. In a learned paper on this and similar difficulties he states that it seems to him 'as if a displacement of a portion of the text had taken place, and as if the verses preceding and following the passage displaced had been thrown into one. The text, as it originally stood, was probably to this effect: 2 Kings xviii. 13. "Now in the fourteenth year of king Hezekiah, the king of Assyria came up (xx. 1–19). In those days was king Hezekiah sick unto death, &c. (xviii. 13). And Sennacherib, king of Assyria, came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them (xviii. 13 *b*–xix. 37.)" In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, Sargon actually went to Palestine, as his annals of the tenth year show; but they mention no conquests made from Hezekiah. His only act of hostility seems to have been the conquest of Asdud, and he seems to have been chiefly occupied with visiting mines, among which is specified the great copper mine of Baalzephon, probably Sarabut-el-Kadim, in the Sinaitic peninsula. In the following year, Merodach Baladan was still in possession of Babylon; but being apprehensive of an attack from Sargon, he would be likely to look about for assistance. Hence his embassy to Hezekiah.

'If, then, the Hebrew text originally stood as is above supposed, it would be in perfect harmony with the contemporary records of Assyria; whereas, if the fourteenth year of Hezekiah be equalled to the third year of Sennacherib, in which that monarch places his expedition against Hezekiah, it is utterly impossible to reconcile with Scripture the capture of Samaria, which was in the sixth year of Hezekiah, and nineteen years previous to the expedition.'[1]

There is only one inaccuracy in this lucidly stated hypothesis. Dr. Hincks supposes that the cuneiform inscriptions are silent as to the achievements of Sargon in Judah; but, as we have already seen (pp. 66, 67), this is by no means the case. His principal point, however, is (so far as I can see) unassailable, viz. that the latest editor of the Hebrew traditions confounded two invasions which were really separated by an interval of ten years—that of Sargon in 711, and that of Sennacherib in 701. The hypothesis of Dr. Hincks (which appears to have attracted very little attention) has since been proposed anew by other scholars, especially Mr. Sayce and H. Brandes. The former, in January 1873, contributed to the *Theological Review* a 'Critical Examination of Isaiah xxxvi.–xxxix. on the Basis of recent Assyrian Discoveries,' to which I have already acknowledged my obligations for the discovery of the subjugation of the kingdom of Judah by Sargon. No Old Testament scholar will fail to admire the acuteness and ingenuity which this essay displays. The discovery which gives it its chief value (divined, but not proved, by Dr. Hincks) pours a flood of light on a whole group of Isaianic prophecies. One cannot, however, help regretting the adventurous character of a part both of the exegesis and of the literary analysis. Even Dr. Kuenen, in speaking of the latter with that reserve

[1] Hincks, 'On the Rectifications of Sacred and Profane Chronology, &c.,' in the *Journal of Sacred Literature*, Oct. 1858, p. 136.

which characterises all his literary judgments, cannot help pronouncing that this well-meant attempt 'does not seem to have been successful.'[1]

The hypothesis of H. Brandes[2] does not require any such arbitrary treatment of the Hebrew text as that proposed by Sir Henry Rawlinson or by Mr. Sayce. Its author argues with great force that 2 Kings xviii. 17 (= Isa. xxxvi. 2) cannot possibly continue the narrative begun in *vv.* 13–16. After Hezekiah had sent tribute,[3] what could induce the Assyrian king to send an army to Jerusalem? If the mission of the Tartan and the Rab-shakeh had taken place in the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, the latter would certainly have accused Hezekiah of complicity with Babylon (comp. chap. xxxix.), and not with Egypt. But all becomes clear if we assign the events of the section beginning at 2 Kings xviii. 17 to 702 B.C., in the spring of which year the third year of Sennacherib officially opened. Babylon had fallen in 710, and Egypt alone remained to be crushed by Assyria. The accusation brought against Hezekiah of having a secret understanding with Egypt is now perfectly intelligible. As for the events related in 2 Kings xviii. 14–16, Dr. Brandes refers them to Sargon's invasion of Judah. Historical accuracy would require us to substitute Sargon for Sennacherib in *v.* 13, though of course critical honesty will not allow us to do so.

This modification of Dr. Hincks's hypothesis is confirmed by the space in our Hebrew Bibles between *v.* 16 and *v.* 17 of 2 Kings xviii. It is in agreement, moreover, with what we know of the procedure of the compiler of Kings elsewhere :—he is not an original writer, but a compiler, and not always what we should call a critical compiler.

It has, I know, been objected that to put Sennacherib's invasion in the twenty-seventh year of Hezekiah makes the persecution of the prophets under Manasseh extremely difficult to realise. Would not so great an interposition of Jehovah, so striking a fulfilment of Isaiah's assurances in His name, give an impulse to the worship of the true God with which the polytheistic party would find it hopeless to contend? And does it not seem to destroy the distinctive character of the event as a turning-point in Israel's history hardly second to the Exodus, if we admit that it was followed so closely by the accession of the renegade Manasseh?—I reply, that the members of the polytheistic party would be sure to ascribe the glory of the removal of the invaders to the gods they themselves worshipped. The writings of Isaiah give us no reason to suppose that he

[1] Kuenen, *The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, p. 289. Dr. Kuenen continues with the remark that Mr. Sayce's essay 'has shown still more clearly than before that the [Hebrew] narrative contains data mutually conflicting, and leaves more than one question unsolved.' For my own part, I agree to some extent with Mr. Sayce, viz. that points of contact with the invasion of Sargon can be traced even after 2 Kings xviii. 17; certainly there is one in *v.* 34 of the same chapter. But a redistribution of the historical material into a Sargon-document and a 'primary' and a 'secondary' Sennacherib-document seems to me impossible.

[2] Brandes, *Abhandlungen zur Geschichte des Orients* (Halle, 1874), p. 81 &c. The theory of the confusion of Sargon and Sennacherib has also been adopted from Mr. Sayce by Prof. Schrader. See *Theologische Studien und Kritiken* (reply to Sayce by Schrader), xlv. 738, 9.

[3] It is noteworthy that in 2 Chron. xxxii. nothing is said of Hezekiah's tribute, but much of his preparations for defence. *Here, too, the fourteenth year is not specified as the date of the invasion.* It is a remark of Dr. Brandes.

exerted any deep spiritual influence; he seems to have been one of those who 'toil all the night, but take nothing.' Contempt and ridicule were the lot of the prophets of Jehovah (xxviii. 9, 10, 22), and there were times in Isaiah's experience (so I think we may infer from xxx. 20) when they even had to 'conceal themselves' or 'withdraw into a corner.' Nor is it right to say that the deliverance from Sennacherib is deprived of its religious importance by the close neighbourhood of Manasseh's persecution. The 'election' of Israel was surely not dependent on the character of its kings, and it was as important for the church-nation of Jehovah to be saved from destruction in Hezekiah's twenty-seventh year as in his fourteenth.

On Dr. Hincks's second point—the transposition of the account of Hezekiah's illness—a long argument is clearly unnecessary. The promise of fifteen years more of life to Hezekiah compels us to place his illness in the fourteenth year of his reign (comp. 2 Kings xviii. 2), which is the year of the invasion of Judah, not by Sennacherib, but by Sargon. Besides this, the embassy of Merodach Baladan to Hezekiah, related in chap. xxxix., can only be adequately accounted for on the supposition that it had a principal reference to this impending invasion. For twelve years, says the Canon of Ptolemy, in harmony with the Assyrian inscriptions, Merodach Baladan, the successful rebel against Assyria, reigned over Babylonia. The twelve years extend from 721 to 710, i.e., to the sixteenth[1] year of Hezekiah. During this period Merodach Baladan might at any moment expect hostilities from Assyria, and he therefore set himself to form as strong a coalition as possible of those who like himself were threatened by that ambitious power. 'Against the will of the gods,' says Sargon in his Annals, '. . he had sent during twelve years ambassadors.'[2] We may reasonably place the embassy to Hezekiah in 713 or 712. At any rate, chaps. xxxviii., xxxix., ought chronologically to precede chap. xxxvi.

The Assyrian account of this great period (great to believers in the 'election' of Israel, not to the Assyrian annalists) is accessible to all in English, French, and German translations. It is extant in three forms (only differing in their greater or less minuteness), which are found respectively in the inscriptions on the Taylor cylinder and on the Koyunjik bulls, and in the text of another cylinder translated by Mr. George Smith.[3] Before, however, drawing the reader's attention to the peculiar features of the Assyrian account, it will be well to give a short historical summary of the events connected with the invasion of Judah by Sennacherib.

In 705, according to the Assyrian Canon, Sargon was murdered in his new and richly adorned palace of Dūr-Sarrukîn (now Khorsabad), about ten miles from Nineveh. He was succeeded by a younger son, the famous Sennacherib, who, though inferior in political talent to his father, seems

[1] We are not, I think, tied up to the literal acceptance of the scheme of chronology to which 2 Kings xviii. 2 belongs. This, as the leading critics agree, is a later addition to the Hebrew narratives.

[2] *Records of the Past*, vii. 41.

[3] For the Taylor cylinder, see *Records of the Past*, i. 33 &c.; for the Bull Inscription, *ibid.*, vii. 57 &c. Readers of German will do better to consult Schrader's extracts and translations, *K. A. T.*, pp. 171–177, and 184–187. For Smith's text (translated), see his *Assyrian Discoveries*, pp. 296–308.

to have made a deeper impression on the Jewish mind. He may be taken, according to Mr. George Smith, 'as the typical Eastern monarch: all the vices of pride and arrogance, cruelty and lust of power, so conspicuous in Oriental sovereigns, were developed to excess in him . . . His military expeditions were on a grand scale, but more designed for show than real conquest. His greatest efforts sometimes bore no fruit, or only ended in disaster. He had no genius for conciliating the peoples he conquered, and his process for putting an end to revolt is shown by the ruin he inflicted on Babylon.'[1] It was, however, a most difficult task which fell to him,—that of the pacification of the Assyrian empire, stirred to its furthest extremities by the news of the murder of Sargon. The foremost of the rebel-chiefs was the sworn foe of Assyria, Merodach Baladan, who emerged from his place of concealment, and once more assumed the Babylonian crown. It was a fruitless effort; Babylon was again captured by the Assyrians, though her champion, with characteristic good fortune, made good his escape. On his return from Babylon, Sennacherib laid his iron hand on the Aramean tribes of the middle Euphrates district. He says himself, on the Bellino cylinder, '208,000 men and women, 7,200 horses, wild asses, asses, 5,330 camels, 70,200 oxen, 800,600 small cattle, a large booty, I carried away to Assyria.'[2]

Meantime, the kings and chiefs of Phœnicia and Palestine had not been idle. The people of Ekron, for instance, had deposed their king Padi, a nominee of Assyria, and sent him in chains to Jerusalem. So Sennacherib himself informs us,[3] and the fact is significant, as the imprisonment of a vassal of Assyria was an overt act of rebellion on the part of Hezekiah. Egypt too had been stirred by the news of the opposition encountered by Sennacherib in various quarters. It seemed a time for clearing off old scores. The active support of Shabataka, the energetic king of Ethiopia, was acquired. 'The people, terrible ever since it arose, the strong, strong nation and all-subduing,' was addressed in imaginative, dramatic style by the poet-prophet Isaiah, who evidently appreciates the noble qualities of the subjects of Shabataka. How the Ethiopian empire prepared to meet the foe, and how the spokesman of Jehovah courteously but decisively repels their assistance, we have already seen in commenting upon chap. xviii.

It was in the spring of 701 ('my third campaign') that Sennacherib, with the deliberateness of conscious strength, condescended to measure himself with the enemies on the west of his empire. Of this period we have, as the reader is aware, a contemporary Assyrian as well as a late Hebrew account, and it is a disputed question how far these two narratives fairly admit of being harmonised. The following combination of facts seems to the writer to supply at least a probable setting for Isaiah's prophecies.—After reducing Sidon and the rest of the Phœnician cities, Sennacherib marched along the coast-road in the direction of Egypt. On his arrival at Lachish he detached a corps from his main army to bring back Judah to its allegiance, and especially to reduce the

[1] Smith, *History of Assyria*, p. 126.
[2] Schrader, *K. A. T.*, 220, 221; comp. *Records of the Past*, i. 26.
[3] Bull Inscription, line 23, *Records of the Past*, vii. 61 (foot).

dangerously strong fortress of Jerusalem. The Tartan[1] or some inferior general invaded the land of Judah, captured forty-six of the fortified towns (this fact we owe to the Assyrian account[2]), and proceeded to summon Jerusalem to surrender (here we follow the Biblical narrative). It was probably (see pp. 105, 106) during the victorious march of the Assyrian detachment that Isaiah wrote the prophecies in chap. xvii. 12-14 and chap. xxxiii., of which the former was apparently composed a little the earlier, though the latter, from the varied nature of its contents, is the more interesting. The prophecy in xxxvii. 21-35[3], self-evidently genuine, in spite of—or rather, because of—its unusually inartistic form, may be taken as a pendant to the more elaborate oracle in chap. xxxiii. The chief difference between these two prophetic 'words' is that chap. xxxiii. regards the invasion from a human point of view—that of the sufferers, chap. xxxvii. 21-35, from the serene height of the prophetic watch-tower, nay, of Jehovah himself.

Let us now turn to the Assyrian account. This has been so often quoted, that I may assume a general acquaintance with it on the part of the reader. There are two passages[4] which apparently conflict with portions of the Hebrew record; let us briefly consider these.

(1.) In the inscription on the Taylor cylinder (col. ii., lines 20-23), Sennacherib, who, like his royal predecessors, often ascribes to himself the achievements of his officers, gives this account of the siege of Jerusalem:—

'. . . Him (Hezekiah) like a caged bird within Jerusalem his royal city I enclosed; towers against him I raised; the exit of the great gate of his city I caused them to break through (?)'

This is surely inconsistent with Isa. xxxvii. 33 (= 2 Kings xix. 32), where Isaiah is represented as prophesying that the king of Assyria should not 'come before [Jerusalem] with shields, nor cast up a bank against it.'—It may be observed, however, (1.) that it is not quite certain that Isaiah really delivered such a prophecy, for his great and undoubtedly genuine oracle has a well-marked conclusion at xxxvii. 29; (2.) that, if these words be genuine, they afford a signal proof that, in the reproduction of Divine revelations, the prophetic writers were not secured from small errors of detail. The wonderfulness of the removal of the invaders does not in the least depend on the erection or non-erection of siege-towers. Granting that Sennacherib's general did 'cast up a bank against' Jerusalem; granting that he even broke through the great gate of the city; this does not necessarily involve an inconsistency with the main point of Isaiah's revelation, viz., that the Jews should in a wonderful manner be relieved from their invaders, at the very moment when human

[1] See note on xx. 1.

[2] Taylor cylinder, col. iii. 13, Schrader, *K. A. T.*, 176, *Records of the Past*, i. 39.

[3] I will not here enter on the question whether the last three verses (33-35) were written at the same time as *vv.* 21-32.

[4] M. Lenormant sees an inconsistency in the place given to Hezekiah's payment of tribute in the Assyrian and the Biblical accounts respectively (see *Les premières civilisations*, ii. 288), but on the hypothesis of H. Brandes, adopted above, the tribute referred to in 2 Kings xviii. 14 was paid to Sargon, not Sennacherib. Another inconsistency might be supposed in the reference to Tirhakah (2 Kings xix. 9); see, however, p. 106.

aid was hopeless. Sennacherib himself does not go so far as to say that he actually captured Jerusalem.

(2.) The second apparent inconsistency between the Assyrian and the Biblical accounts has reference to Tirhakah, whose approach, in conjunction with the 'kings of Egypt,' and its consequences, are described briefly but with great distinctness in the Assyrian inscriptions. The text on the Taylor cylinder (col. ii., lines 73–82) contains the following statement:—

'. . . the kings[1] of Egypt had gathered together the archers, the chariots, the horses of the king of Meroe[2]—a force without number, and they came to their help (i.e., to the help of the Ekronites, see p. 196): the line of battle was placed before me over against Altaku.[3] They called upon their troops. In the service of Asshur my lord, I fought with them and wrought their overthrow. The charioteers and the sons of the king of Egypt, together with the charioteers of the king of Meroe, my hands took in the midst of the battle.'

It is at any rate a plausible conjecture that there is a reference to this in the prediction in Isa. xxxvii. 7 (comp. *v.* 9). If so, it would seem to follow (1.) that the prophet connects the retreat of Sennacherib with the operations of Tirhakah rather than with the plague before Jerusalem, and (2.) that he did not look forward to this complete (?) victory on the part of Sennacherib.

These two implications may appear to some to be unfavourable to the accuracy of the prophet (if at least he really uttered the words ascribed to him). But, in the first place, it may fairly be asked whether the Assyrian account is not guilty, to some extent at least, of a vain-glorious exaggeration? Dr. Schrader has well pointed out[4] that Sennacherib omits the number of the prisoners and of the captured chariots, which is rarely neglected in the bulletin-like Assyrian inscriptions; also that in Sennacherib's later inscriptions he mentions payment of tribute by Hezekiah, but not the victory of Altaku. We may also reasonably ask why Sennacherib did not utilise the triumphant success ascribed to him, and press on to the conquest of Egypt. Dr. Schrader concludes that Sennacherib, though not actually beaten, obtained the victory with so much difficulty that he was compelled to withdraw from the struggle with Egypt; and he willingly admits that Sennacherib's departure may have been accelerated by the news of a pestilence such as that described in 2 Kings xix. 35 (= Isa. xxxvii. 36).[5]

[1] 'Kings,' because of the dismemberment of Egypt already referred to. Or (cf. the Hebrew idiom in Jer. xvii. 20, xxv. 18) the 'sons of the king of Egypt' mentioned afterwards, but this is less probable, as the royal family did not exercise that semi-regal power in Egypt which it seems to have acquired in Judah. 'The king of Egypt' will be the principal of these kings, i.e., Shabataka.

[2] The Assyrian has Milukhkhi. The king in question is Shabataka; see p. 106.

[3] The same as the Eltekeh of Josh. xix. 44.

[4] Schenkel's *Bibel-Lexikon*, art. Sanherib, v. 176.

[5] Dr. Schrader's words are: 'Nicht ausgeschlossen ist bei dieser Lage der Dinge übrigens, dass für seinen Entschluss, definitiv den Rückzug anzutreten, schliesslich ein Ereigniss entscheidend wurde, wie wir es in der Bibel (2 Kön. 19, 35 fg.) angedeutet finden, nämlich eine Pest, welche vielleicht infolge der gelieferten Schlacht oder überhaupt infolge des Krieges im Heer ausgebrochen war und dasselbe decimirt hatte (vgl. Herodot. ii. 141),' *Bibel-Lexikon*, v. 176. This leaves it undecided whether the plague among the Assyrians broke out at Pelusium (comp. Herod., *l. c.*), or before Jerusalem (as the Hebrew narrative implies). The reference to Herodotus, however,

On the one hand, then, Sennacherib (if we accept Dr. Schrader's very plausible conjecture,) exaggerates the importance of his victory at Altaku; on the other, he makes no reference to the calamity which befell a portion of his army before Jerusalem. This is in accordance with the well-known style of imperial bulletins. Perhaps, however, the Assyrian annalist has, in spite of himself, given a hint of the missing facts. M. Lenormant has already drawn attention[1] to the evident embarrassment of the Assyrian annalist after he has related the first events of the invasion of the kingdom of Judah. He transports us abruptly to Nineveh, without telling us why or how; and soon after, we read of a fresh outbreak of rebellion in Babylonia, of which the indomitable Merodach Baladan is the soul.

Such are the main points in this remarkable group of chapters (xxxvi.–xxxix.), which are susceptible of illustration from Assyriology. There remain three other classes of questions into which the plan of this book precludes me from entering. I mean, of course, in the first place, the question as to the origin of these chapters, and as to their relation to the parallel section of the Second Book of Kings; in the second, as to the historical accuracy of the statements in them; and in the third, as to the fulfilment or non-fulfilment of the predictions which they contain, with reference to the supernatural character of prophecy. I have already touched on the first of these classes of problems, stating some of the leading facts, and some of the possible solutions, in *The Book of Isaiah Chronologically Arranged*, pp. 101, 102. Did the range of Isaiah's historical narratives (such is one of the questions which may be asked) extend to the reign of Hezekiah, or did he confine himself to describing the 'acts of Uzziah'[2]? Granting that he wrote some account of the Assyrian invasions in the reign of Hezekiah, was this account planned on a larger scale than the narratives in chaps. vii. and xx., which are merely explanatory introductions to the following prophecies? With regard to the second class, I have made some observations, too short and far too vague, in the same work (pp. 102, 103), in which I have drawn attention to at least a verbal inconsistency between Isa. xxxvii. 30–32 and *v.* 36 of the same chapter, to the juxtaposition of two events in xxxvii. 36 and 37, which the Assyrian inscriptions prove to have been separated by a considerable interval, and to the want of analogy in the preceding prophecies of Isaiah for such an extraordinary sign as that in xxxviii. 8, and for so circumstantial a prediction as that in xxxviii. 5. Lastly, as to the third class of problems, I have not yet ventured to express myself. Reverent students may well hesitate to pronounce on a subject which requires such varied qualifications, and where, in spite of our popular theology, the decision does not lie between only two solutions. True it is, as Elihu has told us, that—

suggests that Dr. Schrader agrees with Thenius and Professor Rawlinson in placing the calamity at Pelusium.

[1] Lenormant, *Les premières civilisations*, ii. 288, 289. Let me warmly recommend the graphic and fact-full essay ('Un patriote babylonien du huitième siècle avant notre ère') of which this passage forms part. It originally appeared in a separate form in the periodical called the *Correspondant*.

[2] See 2 Chron. xxvi. 22. The phraseology of 2 Chron. xxxii. 32 is obscure, and susceptible of more than one interpretation (see *I. C. A.*, p. xv. of the Introduction).

'Old men are not (of themselves) wise,
Neither do the aged (by reason of their age) understand what is right:
But it is the spirit in man,
And the breath of the Almighty which giveth them understanding;'[1]

but the qualifications, moral and intellectual, for the discussion of such a question as prophecy, if not abundantly found even among the old, are still more uncommon among young academical writers, trained as they too generally are to 'love the praise of men more than the praise of God.' I must confess, however, that there are few subjects which attract me more than Old Testament prophecy, even though sympathising more and more with the Apostle's exclamation, 'Who is sufficient for these things?'[2]

[1] And it came to pass in the fourteenth year of the king Hezekiah, that Sennacherib king of Assyria went up against all the fortified cities of Judah, and took them.[a] [2] And the king of Assyria sent[b] the Rab-shakeh from Lachish to Jeru-

[a] 2 Kings xviii. inserts (*vv.* 14–16), 'And Hezekiah king of Judah sent to the king of Assyria to Lachish, saying, I have offended; turn back from me: that which thou puttest upon me, I will bear. And the king of Assyria laid upon Hezekiah three hundred talents of silver, and thirty talents of gold. And Hezekiah gave up all the silver that was found in the house of Jehovah, and in the treasures of the king's house. At that time did Hezekiah cut away (the gold from) the doors of the temple of Jehovah, and (from) the pillars which Hezekiah king of Judah had overlaid, and gave it to the king of Assyria.'

[b] 2 Kings xviii. 17 inserts, 'The Tartan and the Rab-saris and.'

[1] The date and the name of the Assyrian king in this verse appear to be incorrect (see above remarks, pp. 193, 194). The year was really the twenty-seventh, and the King of Assyria Sargon.

Sennacherib] The native Assyrian form of the name is Sin-akhi-irib = 'Sin (the Moongod) gives many brothers;' the Hebrew, Sankhērīb.

[2] **The king of Assyria**] Here and subsequently it is correct to understand Sennacherib, the confused reference to Sargon's campaign being confined to *v.* 1.—— **Sent the Rab-shakeh**] In 2 Kings xviii. 17 we find mention of 'the Tartan and the Rab-saris, as well as 'the Rab-shakeh,' and as in Isa. xxxvii. 6, 24 the 'servants' of the king of Assyria are spoken of, it seems probable that the two former titles have fallen out of the text of this verse. All three are designations of high Assyrian officers. For the first, see on xx. 1. The second, as we have it in Hebrew, means chief of the eunuchs, but the analogy of 'the Rab-shakeh' suggests that it is merely the Hebraized form of an Assyrian title. The third, viz. 'the Rab-shakeh,' in its Hebrew form suggests the meaning 'chief butler' (comp. Gen. xl. 2 Hebr.)—a very singular office to be mentioned here, but the truth is that the Jews merely gave a new turn to a native Assyrian (or rather half-Assyrian, half-Accadian) title, viz. rab-sak, 'chief of the officers,' a military officer, next in rank, as it seems, to the Tartan (see Friedr. Delitzsch, *Assyrische Studien*, i. 131).—— **From Lachish**] The capture of

[1] Job xxxii. 8, 9, transposing the verses, and correcting the rendering of the Authorised Version.

[2] 2 Cor. ii. 16 (St. Paul is speaking of the evangelisation of the heathen; but is the office of 'rightly dividing the word of truth'—under which we may perhaps include critical exegesis—less difficult?).

salem to the king Hezekiah with a great army. And he stationed himself by the conduit of the upper pool on the highway of the fuller's field. [3] [c]And there went out to him[c] Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, who was over the house, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah, son of Asaph, the annalist. [4] And the Rab-shakeh said to them, Say ye, I pray, to Hezekiah, Thus saith the great king, the king of Assyria, What is this trust with which thou trustest? [5] [d]Thinkest thou that a mere word of the lips is counsel and strength for war[d]! Now on whom dost thou trust that thou hast rebelled against me? [6] Behold thou trustest on this staff of a cracked reed, on Egypt; which, if a man lean on it, will go into his hand, and pierce it: so is Pharaoh, king of Egypt, to all who trust in him. [7] And if thou sayest unto me, In Jehovah, our God, is our trust, is it not he, whose high places and whose altars Hezekiah hath taken away, and said to Judah and to Jerusalem,

[c] 2 Kings xviii. 18 reads, 'And they called for the king, and there came out to them,'

[d] So 2 Kings xviii. 20, according to the rendering of Seinecke and Wellhausen. The Hebr. text of Isaiah has, 'I say—only a word of the lips—counsel and strength for war,' which requires us to supply 'sayest thou, but it is' after 'I say,' and 'I have' before 'counsel.'

Lachish was thought important enough to be commemorated on two large bas-reliefs in Sennacherib's palace; one of these has an explanatory inscription (see *Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, 1878, plate opposite p. 85). The importance of the place doubtless arose from its commanding the direct route from Egypt to Judah. Sennacherib could here await the Egyptians (see xxxvii. 8).——**By the conduit of the upper pool**] The very spot where Ahaz had held his famous colloquy with Isaiah (vii. 3). Unbelief was represented then by an Israelite; now, more naturally, by an Assyrian.

[3] **Eliakim**] The disciple of Isaiah has supplanted Shebna the foreigner: see on xxii. 15–25.

[4] **The great king**] He refuses to recognize Hezekiah as a king. The right of the strongest throws Judah prostrate at the feet of the 'great king.' *Sarru rabbu*, 'great king,' *sarru dannu*, 'strong king,' *sar kissâti*, 'king of hosts,' are the constant descriptive titles applied to themselves by the Assyrian kings.

[6] **A cracked reed**] Not 'a broken reed,' as Auth. Vers., for who would lean on such a staff? Comp. xlii. 3 'a cracked reed *he shall not break*.' The phrase is picturesquely descriptive of the effects of disunion and defeat. See on chap. xix., and xxx. 3, 5, 7. Parallel passage, Ezek. xxix. 6, 7.——**Pharaoh, king of Egypt**] Here, as in the Assyrian inscriptions, the title Pharaoh is used inaccurately as a proper name. The particular Pharaoh intended is Shabataka (see Introd. to chap. xviii.).

[7] **And if thou sayest unto me**] The Assyrians had a well-organised intelligence-department. Sennacherib had heard of the reformation of worship undertaken by Hezekiah (2 Kings xviii. 4, comp. 2 Chron. xxxi. 1). This, from his heathen point of view, was an act of gross impiety towards Jehovah; for had not Jehovah been worshipped from time immemorial at most if not all of the 'high places'? The local sanctuaries designated by

Before this altar shall ye worship? [8] And now lay a wager, I pray, with my lord, the king of Assyria. I will give thee two thousand horses, if thou art able to set for thyself riders upon them. [9] How then canst thou turn away the face of a single officer from among the meanest servants of my lord? This is why thou trustest in Egypt for chariots and for horsemen. [10] And now, is it without Jehovah that I have come up against this land to destroy it? Jehovah said unto me, Go up against yonder land and destroy it. [11] And Eliakim and Shebna and Joah said to the Rab-shakeh, Pray speak unto

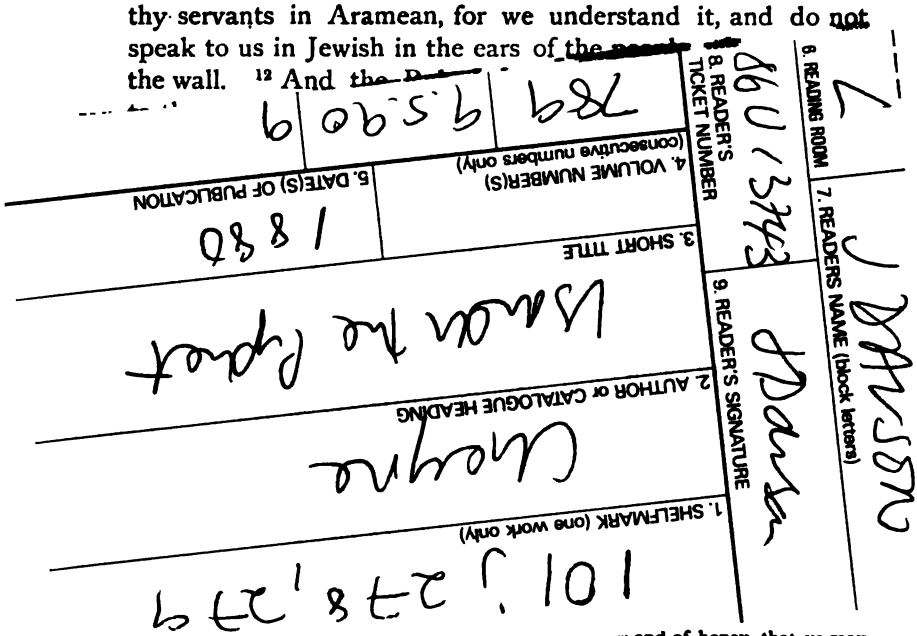
the latter phrase appear from the inscriptions to have been known in Assyria and Babylonia as well as Palestine; indeed, they go back to Accadian—i.e., pre-Semitic—times (Sayce, *Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, iv. 30).

8.9 These two verses are spoken by the Rab-shakeh in his own name, though in the spirit of his master. In *v.* 10 he returns to the royal message, precisely as the Hebrew prophets speak, sometimes more directly, sometimes less, in the name of Jehovah. There is therefore no occasion on this ground to disintegrate the narrative with Mr. Sayce (*Theological Review*, 1873, p. 22).—We have first a disparaging comparison between the weakness of the Jews (which suggests that there is some degree of oratorical exaggeration in ii. 7) and the strength of the Assyrians in cavalry (comp. v. 28); this of course implies tacitly that a small detachment of the Assyrian army would be equal to overpowering the Jews. ——**The face**] i.e., the attack.——**Officer**] The Hebr. *pakhath* ('construct' form of *pekhah*) is from the Assyrian *pakhat* 'satrap' or 'governor.' ——**This is why** . . .] i.e., because Judah itself is so deficient in cavalry.

10 Sennacherib professes to have received an oracle from Jehovah, who is irritated at the overthrow of his high places. One cannot help conjecturing that here, as in *v.* 15, the writer has given an Israelitish colouring to the ideas of Sennacherib (on the analogy of x. 10). Still it is only the word Jehovah which is out of place. 'Go, take Nebo (in war) against Israel,' says the god Chemosh to king Mesha on the Moabite Inscription; a prophet or a dream-voice (see *Records of the Past*, ix. 52) may have seemed to give a similar bidding to Sennacherib.

11 Eliakim and his companions apprehend an evil effect of this vigorous speech upon the multitude, and therefore beg the Rab-shakeh to employ the Aramaic instead of the 'Jewish' tongue. The statement implies that Assyrian as well as Jewish officials were acquainted with Aramaic, as being the great commercial language of Syria, Palestine, and West Asia. Nor are we confined to mere inference. Private contract-tablets in Aramaic and Assyrian have been found in the remains of ancient Nineveh. But the Rab-shakeh had a still wider range of linguistic knowledge. He belonged to a nation which had a genuine interest in the study of languages, and his official duties doubtless prompted him to extend his knowledge to the utmost. No wonder, then, if he could speak Hebrew. There is much difficulty, however, in the application of the term **Jewish**. In xix. 18 Isaiah speaks of Hebrew as 'the tongue of Canaan,' which shows (in harmony with the inscription on the Moabite Stone) that the language of Judah

thy servants in Aramean, for we understand it, and do not speak to us in Jewish in the ears of the people that are on the wall. [12] And the Rab-



...ruits and of honey, that ye may

...ent to Hezekiah.

...xviii. 32 reads, For he enticeth you.

cannot have differed materially from that of the rest of Palestine (Phœnicia of course being excluded). 'Jewish,' therefore, means Hebrew, and not merely the dialect of the tribe of Judah (as Naeg.). But the only other example (except in the parallel passages in Kings and Chronicles) of this use of the word is in a passage of post-exile date (Neh. xiii. 24). It is only reasonable to infer that this account of the proceedings of the Rab-shakeh has been, at any rate, considerably modified by a post-exile writer.

[12] **Who sit upon the wall**] Who are stationed there for defence.—— **To eat . . .**] i.e., with no other result than reducing them to the utmost conceivable distress.

[13] Eliakim has given the Rab-shakeh an advantage of which the clever courtier at once avails himself. He now comes forward in the character of a friend of the deluded Jewish people.

[15] **And let not Hezekiah . . .**] Here, as in *v.* 10, a Jewish colouring is distinctly visible. An Assyrian, as Mr. Sayce has remarked (*Theological Review*, 1873, p. 23), 'would hardly have been able to reproduce so exactly the encouragement held out by Isaiah' (xxxvii. 35).

[16] **Make a treaty**] Lit., 'a blessing,' treaties being accompanied with mutual benedictions. The phrase is unique, but is analogous to the use of 'blessing' in the sense of 'a present' (frequently).—— **Come out**] i.e., surrender, as 1 Sam. xi. 3, Jer. xxxviii. 17.—— **Eat ye. . .**] The Jews are invited to go on quietly in their usual mode of living, until Sennacherib has brought his campaign against Egypt to a close; then, no doubt, they will be removed from their home, but a new home will be given them equal to the old.

[18] **Beware lest Hezekiah . . .**]

deliver us. Have the gods of the nations delivered, every one his land, from the hand of the king of Assyria? [19] Where are the gods of Hamath and Arpad? where are the gods of Sepharvaim [g]? and how much less have [its gods] delivered Samaria out of my hand! [20] Which are they among all the gods of these lands which have delivered their land out of my hand? how much less can Jehovah deliver Jerusalem out of my hand! [21] And [h] they kept silence, and answered him not a word, for the king's commandment ran thus, Ye shall not answer him. [22] And there came Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, who was over the house, and Shebna the secretary, and Joah, son of Asaph, the annalist, to Hezekiah with rent clothes, and they told him the words of the Rab-shakeh.

[g] 2 Kings xviii. 34 adds, Hena and Ivvah (see note [a] on chap. xxxvii.).
[h] 2 Kings xviii. 36 reads, The people.

The Assyrian is inconsistent. In his first speech he had stated himself to be the obedient instrument of Jehovah (*v.* 10); here, in accordance with x. 10, 11, he represents the wars of the Assyrians as inspired by a religious hostility to all the 'gods of the nations.'——**Of the king of Assyria**] He could not say 'out of my hand' (as *v.* 19), for Hamath and Arpad had been conquered by Sargon.

[19] **Where are the gods of Hamath . . .**] The answer would have been, In Assyrian shrines: see Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, i. 475. Parallel passage, x. 9.——**Have [its gods] . . .**] Supply the bracketted words from the context; comp. 'the gods of the nations,' *v.* 18.

[21] **Ye shall not answer him**] For the Jews had, in fact, nothing that would seem, from an Assyrian point of view, a satisfactory answer.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

[1] And it came to pass, when the king Hezekiah heard it, that he rent his clothes, and covered himself with sackcloth, and came into the house of Jehovah. [2] And he sent Eliakim, who was over the house, and Shebna the secretary, and the elders of the priests, covered with sackcloth, to Isaiah the prophet, son of Amoz. [3] And they said unto him, Thus saith Hezekiah, This day is a day of trouble and punishment

[2] This distinguished embassy shows the political importance attaching to Isaiah and indeed to the prophetic office in itself. Similar applications for prophetic intervention are recorded to Huldah (2 Kings xxii. 14) and to Jeremiah (Jer. xxxvii. 3). On the other hand, Ahab evinces his hostile spirit by sending an ordinary courtier to fetch Micaiah (1 Kings xxii. 9).

[3] **Punishment**] The sense 'rebuke' (Auth. Vers.) is clearly unsuitable. Judicial decision is the

and contumely, for the children have come to the birth, and there is not strength to bring forth. 4 Perhaps Jehovah thy God will hear the words of the Rab-shakeh, with which the king of Assyria, his lord, hath sent him to reproach the living God, and will deal punishment for the words which Jehovah thy God hath heard, and thou wilt utter a prayer for the remnant which exists. 5 And the servants of the king Hezekiah came to Isaiah. 6 And Isaiah said unto them, Thus shall ye say unto your lord, Thus saith Jehovah, Be not afraid because of the words which thou hast heard, with which the minions of the king of Assyria have reviled me. 7 Behold, I will place a spirit in him, so that he shall hear tidings, and return to his

root-meaning; the context must determine the more precise reference. See Hos. v. 9, Ps. cxlix. 7. ——**Contumely**] i.e., blasphemy. This rend. suits the context (see *v.* 4), and is required in the other passages where the word occurs (with one vowel-point different), viz., Neh. ix. 18, 26, Ezek. xxxv. 12.——**The children have come . . .**] A proverbial expression rises naturally to the lips to express the all but desperate condition of the state. One hope, indeed, as the next verse shows, still remains—a hope in the Biblical sense, i.e., a sure confidence—the faithfulness of Jehovah. Comp. the similar transition, following upon the same figure, in Hos. xiii. 14.

4 **Will hear**] The word includes the idea of corresponding action. ——**Utter a prayer**] The intercessory prayers of a prophet 'availed much'; see Ex. xxxii. 10, 11, Jer. xv. 1.——**The remnant which exists**] Forty-six fortified towns had been already taken (it appears from the Assyrian account), when the Assyrian general (according to the Hebrew account) summoned Jerusalem to surrender.

5 **And . . . came to Isaiah**] 'A natural and simple resumption of the narrative, common in all inartificial history' (Alexander). This is surely the most obvious view, and Mr. Driver is led astray by a controversial bias when he remarks (*Hebrew Tenses*, p. 94), 'There is no proof that the interview mentioned in Is. xxxvii. 5 is *the same* as that in *v.* 3: the messengers may well have left the prophet in retirement for a while before *entering in*, *v.* 5, to receive his answer.' One may admit that it would be an error to introduce the pluperfect, of which in the Hebrew texts Mr. Driver has so wholesome a suspicion, but this is not required on the above view of the passage.

6 **The minions**] It is a disparaging expression (not '*abhdé*, as *v.* 5, but *na'ărê*). Del. renders *knappen* (= squires).

7 **I will place a spirit in him**] 'A spirit' is probably not to be understood personally (comp. 1 Sam. xviii. 10, 1 Kings xxii. 21), but in the weaker sense of impulse, inclination; comp. xix. 14, xxix. 10, Num. v. 14, Hos. iv. 12, Zech. xiii. 2. The two senses are, however, very closely connected. The Egyptians believed in the existence, in the supersensible world, of a genius, a spirit, or an εἴδωλον, even of abstract qualities or official dignities —the name for such a genius was *ka* (Le Page Renouf, *Transactions Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, March 1879. The rendering of Auth. Vers. is against the Hebrew idiom.—— **Shall hear tidings**] We are not told whether these 'tidings' referred to the hostile movement of Tirhakah (see *v.* 9), or to the pestilence

own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land.

[8] And the Rab-shakeh returned and found the king of Assyria warring against Libnah, for he had heard that he had broken up from Lachish. [9] And he heard say concerning Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, He is gone forth to fight against thee. And when he heard it, he sent messengers to Hezekiah, saying, [10] Thus shall ye say unto Hezekiah, king of Judah, Let not thy God, in whom thou trustest, deceive thee, saying, Jerusalem shall not be surrendered into the hand of the king of Assyria. [11] Behold, thou thyself hast heard what the kings of Assyria have done unto all lands, destroying them utterly; and canst thou be delivered? [12] Did the gods

mentioned (apparently) in *v.* 36, or, what seems a more probable reason for Sennacherib's 'return to his own land,' to some insurrection in another part of the Assyrian empire. Del. combines the two former references; Kuenen (*The Prophets and Prophecy in Israel*, p. 296), pronounces for the latter. The absence of any explanation confirms the view that the narrative in its present form belongs to a time when the traditional knowledge of the events was confined to the broad outlines of history.——**By the sword**] See *v.* 38.

[8] **Warring against Libnah**] No doubt this movement was dictated by the approach of the Egyptians. Libnah is generally placed near Lachish; a place of this name belonged to the tribe of Judah (Josh. xv. 42). It seems bold in M. Oppert to identify this Libnah with Pelusium (comp. Herod. ii. 141).

[9] **Tirhakah**] Famous both in the Assyrian and in the Egyptian inscriptions (comp. on xviii. 2). The former call him Tarku, the latter Taháraqa; comp. the Hebr. accentuation Tirhákah. Assurbanipal, like the Hebrew writer, calls him 'king (*sar*) of Cush,' sometimes also 'king of Muçur and Cush.'—As to the accuracy of the reference to Tirhakah, see introd. to chap. xviii.

[10] The message is an amplification of the argument in xxxvi. 18–21.

[12] **My fathers**] = predecessors; Sargon being the founder of a new dynasty.——**Gozan**, &c.] All Mesopotamian towns and districts (see Schrader, *Keilinschriften und Geschichtsforschung*, p. 199).——**Telassar**] Hebraized from Tul-Asur, 'hill of Asur' (Asshur). Shalmaneser II. relates how he went out against a stronghold belonging to Akhuni the Son of Adini; put him to flight, and conquered several cities on both sides of the Euphrates. Of four[1] of these he says he changed the names, and the type of two of the names ('Law, Command of Asur') is exactly like Tul-Asur. It may be inferred that either Shalmaneser or Sargon gave the latter name to another of the cities of Bit-Adini. This was a petty kingdom extending some little way both east and west of the Euphrates (Schrader, *l. c.*). Whether it is the Beth-Eden of Am. i. 5 may be questioned; its identity with the Eden of our passage and of Ezek. xxvii. 23 seems evident.——**Sons of Eden**] A tribal appellation, comp. 'Son of Adini' above, and note on xxxix. 1.

[1] So Sayce, *Records of the Past*, iii. 92; Schrader, however, says three.

of the nations which my fathers destroyed deliver them, (such as) Gozan, and Haran, and Rezeph, and the Sons of Eden who were in Telassar? [13] Where is the king of Hamath, and the king of Arpad, and the king of the city of Sepharvaim, [a] Hana, and Avvah? [a]

[14] And Hezekiah took the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of Jehovah, and spread it before Jehovah. [15] And Hezekiah

[a] The Hebr. punctuation gives *hena v'ivva*, which most understand to be names of places, Hena and Ivvah, but which more probably means 'he hath made to wander, and overturned' (so apparently the Targum and Symmachus). This is clearly a wrong view of the original. Hana is here provided with its first vowel conjecturally; Avvah is so written in accordance with 2 Kings xvii. 24.

[13] **Where is the king of Hamath . . .**] The connection between *vv.* 12, 13 escapes those who take 'king' in the phrase 'king of Hamath' in its modern, exclusive application, whereas 'king' here, as so often in the Semitic languages (comp. viii. 21), means tutelary god. This follows necessarily from xxxvi. 19, as was already seen by Clericus. ——**Hana and Avvah**] These two places cannot be identified; and yet so brief a mention of them, in company with such famous cities, shows that they must have been of considerable importance. Probably the names have not been transmitted with accuracy. The same forms occur in 2 Kings xix. 13. See note *a*.

[14] **The letter**] The word is in the plural (we might render 'the leaves'); comp. *literæ*.——**Went up into the house of Jehovah**] Mr. George Smith, the Assyriologist, suggests a striking parallel from the life of king Assurbanipal, which is not, however, without its contrasts. Teumman, king of Elam, 'had vowed that he would not rest till he had fought with Assurbanipal. On receiving this message, Assurbanipal went into the sanctuary of Ishtar . . . [He] approached the goddess, he wept before her, he reminded her of his good deeds in restoring the temples, professed that he loved her courts, and went to worship her; he contrasted the conduct of Teumman, the violent man, hater of the gods; he related all her titles and glories, told how Teumman gathered his army against him, &c.' (*Assyria*, p. 156). The same night a seer received an oracle from Ishtar in a vision (referred to above, on xxxvi. 10), promising victory to Assurbanipal. The contrast lies in the absence of self-commendation in the prayer of Hezekiah, and in Jehovah's promise to overthrow Sennacherib without human agency. How far, it may however be asked, can the prayer of Hezekiah be regarded as authentic? Kuenen has already remarked that no such strong statement of monotheism occurs in the works of Hezekiah's contemporaries, Isaiah and Micah, and it seems a natural supposition that the more developed faith of the later writer has here given a colouring to his language. Yet I think we may assert that Isaiah (and presumably Hezekiah) felt as a monotheist. So much seems clear from his writings, though his conscious belief may not have been so clear as that of his successors. With this reserve, we may admit the prayer of Hezekiah as being at any rate as accurate an expression of his sentiments as that in the Annals of Assurbanipal.——**Spread it before Jehovah**] Not 'in order that the LORD himself might read it' (Thenius)—a survival of gross anthropomorphism,

prayed to Jehovah, saying, [16] Jehovah Sabáoth, God of Israel, who [b]art enthroned upon[b] the cherubim, thou art alone the (true) God for all the kingdoms of the earth; [c]thou hast made the heavens and the earth. [17] Incline, Jehovah, thine ear and hear; open thine eyes, Jehovah, and see; and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which he hath sent to reproach the living God. [18] Of a truth, Jehovah, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the [c]nations and their land, [19] and have put

[b] So Hitz., Del., Hengstenberg, Keil, Oehler, Kay.—Or, inhabitest, Ew., Riehm.
[c] So 2 Kings xix. 17.—Text, lands (obviously a clerical error).

which Gesenius even compares to the prayer-machines of the Buddhists. The action of 'spreading out' the letter is symbolical; hence the combination of phrases in *v.* 17, 'hear' and 'see,' both meaning simply 'regard.' It was the arrogance of which the letter was the symbol which Jehovah was besought to take notice of, and it was the believing dependence on Jehovah—not the mechanical act here mentioned—which produced the desired result. The spread out letter was a 'prayer without words' (Del.).

[16] **Who art enthroned upon the cherubim**] There is probably a double reference in this phrase, 1. to the cherub of the storm-cloud (see *Encycl. Brit.*, art. 'Cherubim'), 2. to the figures of the cherubim on the ark. For the former, comp. Ps. xviii. 10, 'And he rode upon a cherub, and did fly;' for the latter, Num. vii. 89, 'He heard the voice speaking unto him from off the lid upon the ark of the witness, from between the two cherubim,' see also Ex. xxv. 22.—**Thou hast made . . .**] The creative power of Jehovah, as contrasted with the impotence of the idols, becomes a favourite subject of contemplation in II. Isaiah (xl. 18–26, xlii. 5–8) and in the post-exile psalms (Ps. xcvi. 5, cxv. 3, 4, 15, cxxxv. 5, 6); comp. also the Chaldee insertion in Jer. x. 11 (*Q. P. B.*).

Vv. 21–35. A prophecy 'of striking interest, and both in form and matter stamped with the mark of Isaiah' (*I. C. A.*, p. 101). This latter point is of importance, as the Isaianic origin of the rest of the historical section has been so much questioned. Delitzsch divides the prophecy into eight almost equal stanzas; but this seems arbitrary. We have before us—what is unfortunately so rare—a discourse nearly, if not quite, in the form in which it was delivered. All Isaiah's other works evidently owe much to reflection and to art; here however his genius works quite naturally and truly. He seems to recognise (I am here speaking of his prophecy only as a literary work) that he has a foeman worthy of his steel, and, in contrasting the opposite religious spirits of Assyria and Israel, has done even-handed justice to each. How vividly, too, and how poetically he has represented the military prowess of his country's enemies!—how truthfully, we may now add, since the Assyrian monuments have placed us in a position to judge! The eloquent lines devoted by M. Lenormant[1] to Assyrian strategy rectify the unconscious injustice of historians, and attest the accuracy of the Hebrew prophet.

[1] *Les premières civilisations*, ii. 259, 260.

their gods into the fire; for no gods were they, but the work of men's hands, wood and stone; and have destroyed them. 20 And now, Jehovah our God, save us out of his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou art Jehovah, thou alone.

21 And Isaiah, son of Amoz, sent unto Hezekiah, saying, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of Israel, That which thou hast prayed unto me concerning Sennacherib king of Assyria [d I have heard d]. 22 This is the word which Jehovah hath spoken against him, Despiseth and mocketh at thee the virgin-daughter of Zion; behind thee shaketh her head the daughter of Jerusalem. 23 Whom hast thou reproached and reviled? and against whom hast thou raised the voice and lifted up thine eyes on high? Against the Holy One of Israel. 24 By thy *servants thou hast reproached the Lord, and hast said, With the multitude of my chariots have *I* ascended to the height of the mountains, to the recesses of Lebanon; and I will cut down its tallest cedars and its choicest fir-trees; and

[d] These words are supplied in 2 Kings xix. 20. * Messengers, 2 Kings xix. 23.

21 **And Isaiah . . . sent**] Are we to understand that Isaiah was supernaturally warned of Hezekiah's prayer (comp. Acts ix. 11), or have we simply a curtailed summary of what took place?

22 **Behind thee**] Pursuing the retreating foe.

24 **Have *I* ascended**] *I*, the great, the all-powerful king, have performed this seemingly impossible feat. The Assyrian inscriptions present several parallels to this boastful language. Thus Shalmaneser says, 'Trackless paths and difficult mountains, which, like the point of an iron sword, stood pointed to the sky, on wheels of iron and bronze I penetrated,' lit., 'I dug up' (*Records of the Past*, iii. 85); and Assurnaçirpal, 'Rugged paths, difficult mountains, which for the passage of chariots and armies was (were) not suited, I passed;' 'The rugged hill-country . . . with instruments of iron I cut through' (*op. cit.*, pp. 43, 58, comp. 60). Similarly Tiglath-Pileser I. (*op. cit.*, pp. 9, 10, 16). Elsewhere, however, Shalmaneser at least is more modest: '(My) warrior-host traversed the mountain; bravely (in) its heart opposition it brought, and *ascended on its feet*' (*op. cit.*, p. 97). Clearly these boasts of Sennacherib are not to be taken literally. He was indeed no stranger to mountain-passes, but it was not necessary for him to cross the range of Lebanon in order to enter Palestine. The boasts are to be explained (with Knobel) on the analogy of the phrase 'to ride upon the high places of the land' (see on lviii. 14) = 'to conquer and rule over it.' Lebanon, as the northern bulwark of the land of Israel, is used as a representative or symbol for the whole country (comp. Zech. xi. 1). This application of the word accounts for the following futures, 'I will cut down . . . I will enter,' which mean that the conquest of Palestine had still to be completed. (There is no occasion to take the perfects as perfects of prophetic certitude = 'I will ascend,' &c.).—— **I will cut down . . .**] This feature

I will come into its furthest [f]height, its garden-like woodland;
[25] I have digged and drunk [g] waters, and will dry up with the
sole of my feet all the canals of Egypt. [26] Hast thou not
heard? long ago I made it; in ancient times I fashioned it;
now have I brought it to pass, so that thou shouldest be (able)
to destroy fortified cities into desolate heaps. [27] And their

[f] Lodging-place, 2 Kings xix. 23.
[g] 2 Kings xix. 24 inserts Foreign.

in the description must be taken symbolically, if the view adopted at the end of the last note be correct. Tall cedars and choice fir-trees will be 'kings, princes, nobles, all that is highest and most stately' (Birks), comp. ii. 13, x. 34, lx. 13. But though symbolical, the description is in harmony with literal fact. The cutting down of timber was an ordinary feature of Assyrian expeditions. The two kings referred to above repeatedly mention it. Thus Assurnaçirpal 'caused the forests of all (his enemies) to fall' (*Records of the Past*, iii. 40, 77), and Shalmaneser calls himself 'the trampler on the heads of mountains and all forests' (*op. cit.*, p. 83, comp. p. 90). Such great builders needed the wood for their palaces, their fleets, and their machines of war. But it was also a religious act to cut down the trees; at any rate in a country where the cultus of mountains was so developed as in Syria. Just so the Persians cut down the sacred groves of the Greeks. Comp. xiv. 8, Hab. ii. 17.——**Its furthest height**] i.e., mount Zion (so Jer. xxii. 6, 23). The reading in 2 Kings (see note [f]) is, however, better as more peculiar. 'Height' may be a lapse of the pen, but is more probably due to the desire of our editor for simplification (obs. in *v.* 25 his omission of the adjective).

[25] **I have digged . . .**] He implies that he has already exhausted the natural streams of Palestine, and been obliged to dig wells. 'Credimus altos | Defecisse amnes, epotaque flumina Medo | Prandente,' Juv., *Sat.*, x. 176.—Or, if the perfect be prophetic (see note on *v.* 24), he may refer to the desert of the *Tîh* (between Palestine and Egypt), where the digging of wells would be a necessity, and a hyperbole need not be supposed.——**Will dry up . . .**] He reserves his greatest achievement for the last. The conquest of Egypt was the true goal of the Assyrian kings. Hitherto the Egyptians had trusted, to apply the words used by Nahum (iii. 8) of Thebes, in 'her rampart the sea (i.e., the Nile), and her wall of the sea.' But the many-branched Nile should cease to be a protection; so numerous were the hosts of Asshur.

[26] **Hast thou not heard . . .**] Sennacherib had, in fact, not heard, but is not excusable on that account, comp. Mic. v. 15, *Q. P. B.*, and see on x. 7. We may understand *v.* 26 in three different ways: (1.) as a specimen of prophetic irony: 'so wise and so almighty in your own esteem, are you, after all, a poor ignorant mortal?' (Birks). Or (2.) we may justify Isaiah's language by the not improbable supposition that the Assyrian officials, who were acquainted with the Hebrew language (see xxxvi. 11), might if they had liked have informed themselves more accurately about the Jewish religion. Or (3.) we may suppose Isaiah to be only nominally addressing Sennacherib, and really intending a word of comfort for Hezekiah. Graetz strangely takes *vv.* 22–28 to be an extract from a diplomatic letter (not, however, denying Isaiah's authorship).——**Long ago**] In the counsels of eternity, see on xxii. 11.

[27] **Became grass**] So king As-

inhabitants were [h]of small power,[h] were dismayed and ashamed; they became (as) grass of the field, and green herbage, blades of the housetops, and [i]a blasting (?) . . . [28] And before me is thy standing up and thy sitting down; and thy going out and thy coming in do I know,[i] and thy inward rage against me. [29] Because of thy rage against me, and that thy recklessness hath come up into mine ears, I will put my hook into thy nose and my bridle into thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest.

[30] And this shall be the sign unto thee:—one eateth this

[h] Lit., short of hand.

[i] So Wellhausen.—Text, A field before the stalk. And thy sitting down, and thy going out, and thy coming in, do I know.—Instead of 'a field,' 2 Kings xix. 26 reads 'a blasting,' which is preferred by Ges., Ew., Hitz., Del.

surnaçirpal, 'Kings . . . he cut off like grass' (*Records of the Past*, iii. 41).—**A blasting** . . .] The form of the printing is meant to indicate that something has fallen out of the text, and that the last word is possibly corrupt. It is quite true that the readings of both copies of this prophecy (that in Isaiah and that in Kings) are susceptible, or at least have been thought susceptible, of a meaning. 'A blasting before the stalk' is thought to signify 'corn blasted while it is still grass,' and a 'field before the stalk' to mean 'corn while it is still grass.' Both expressions are surely unnatural. Besides this, the opening of *v.* 28 is left unsymmetrical; 'sitting down' requires a parallel phrase to balance it; comp. Ps. cxxxix. 2. See crit. note.

[28] **Before me**] i.e., (is) become known to me (Esth. ix. 11). The connection is, 'I appointed it (viz. thy victorious career) long ago, and I notice every step thou takest in carrying out my plan' (Kay, retaining the traditional text).

[29] **My hook . . . my bridle**] No mere symbolical expression, as the Assyrian bas-reliefs show. The 'hook' in the nose is indeed unusual, though not quite unexampled in Babylonian sculpture (comp. Ezek. xxxviii. 4, 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, *Q. P. B.*). The 'bridle' is the 'hong or rope by which the more distinguished captives were led about. See Prof. Rawlinson, *Ancient Monarchies*, ii. 304, iii. 436.

[30] **The sign**] 'The sign' not of what precedes, but of that which follows (see on *v.* 32). The departure of Sennacherib would be the signal for a new and blessed life in the all but extinct churchnation of Jehovah. 'The hardly-earned existence of the Jews during the next two years [rather, fourteen or fifteen months] is a pledge of the brighter future in store; that is, of the Messianic period' (*I.C.A.*, p. 105). It is necessary to lay stress upon this, otherwise it would be difficult to see in what the 'sign' consisted, or why it was necessary. The 'sign' consisted in the certitude of the prophet that the danger from Assyria was over, and the Messianic period at hand. This certitude required a basis of supernatural knowledge. 'The sudden flight of Sennacherib to Nineveh could not, of itself, put an end to all fear of a fresh invasion, not even when the terrible extent of the judgment was known. It might seem unlikely that a single check should wholly turn back a tide of conquest and plunder which had set in for thirty years' (Birks). Isaiah ventures, in the face of this unlikelihood, to assure the Jews that there would be no repetition of an Assyrian invasion. He even goes further, and

year the after-growth, and the second year that which groweth of itself; but the third year sow ye and reap, and plant vineyards and eat the fruit thereof. [31] And the escaped of the house of Judah who are left shall again take root downward and bear fruit upward; [32] for out of Jerusalem shall go forth a remnant, and those who escape out of mount Zion. The

speaks as if the Messianic period was close at hand. Without a violation of psychological laws, such as we have no Old Testament analogy for assuming, it would perhaps have been impossible for him to realize the long interval between his own period and the ideal age; at any rate, it appears that, when this prophecy was delivered, he did not realize it. It is for these bold assurances, of the close of the Assyrian period, and the advent of the Messianic age, that Isaiah here offers a sign. —— **The after-growth**] Lit., that which is added, i.e., the produce of the grains which had dropped out by chance at the last harvest. —— **But the third year**] It may be asked why the 'sign' should be postponed to the third year. Some (Hitz., Knob., and formerly Del.) reply: (*a*) Because the Assyrians would pass through Judah on their return from Egypt, and so the harvest of the second year would be lost. Others (*b*) suppose that the second year was sabbatic, and on this account the cultivation of the land was to be suspended. But with regard to (*a*), Consul Wetzstein has shown that it is not necessary to assume a second Assyrian invasion. 'If, for example, the breaking up of the fallow had to be omitted in the winter of 1864–65 on account of the enemy, there could be no sowing in the autumn of 1865, nor any harvest in the summer of 1866.... If seed were to be sown in the newly-broken fallow, there would be no harvest, and the seed would be lost' (Delitzsch, *Jesaia*, 1st ed., p. 655). And as to (*b*), the supposition is really quite gratuitous. 'It is not only improbable in itself that the prophet took up this calendar-matter into his 'sign,' but there are chronological indications (see Hitzig) that the year 715 had been sabbatic' [1] (Del.). The fact is, that the postponement of the sign is not so great as might be supposed. The prophecy was probably delivered in autumn (see on xxxiii. 9), somewhat before the close of the civil year. The second year would thus be from Tisri (or October) 713 to Tisri 712, and this would be the only year completely lost to agriculture. In ordinary language, then, the prophet assures the Jews that within fourteen or fifteen months the tillage of the ground might be resumed.

[31. 32] The population concentrated during the invasion at Jerusalem shall again spread over the land, and repair its losses. —— **The escaped**...] A characteristic reference to the great doctrine of the 'remnant.' Comp. iv. 2, 3, x. 20, 21. —— **Who are left**] The same pleonasm as in xi. 11, 16. —— **Take root downward**...] Thus reversing the judgment in v. 24; comp. xxvii. 6. —— **The jealousy**...] 'Jealousy,' being the affectional manifestation of the Divine holiness, is a 'two-edged word,' implying the destruction of all that opposes the Divine covenant, and the furtherance of all that promotes

[1] That 715 B.C. was a sabbatic year is inferred by Hitz. from the fact that the years 276, 178, 150 of the Seleucid period were sabbatic (comp. Jos. *Ant.* xv. 1. 2, xiii. 8. 1; 1 Macc. vi. 20, 49, 53). How exactly, he continues, the chronology of sabbatic years was observed even before the Exile, is clear from Jer. xxxiv., where sabbatic year can only be 589 B.C.

jealousy of Jehovah Sabáoth shall perform this. [33] Therefore thus saith Jehovah concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast up a bank against it. [34] By the way that he come, by the same shall he return, and into this city he shall not come; it is the oracle of Jehovah. [35] And I will cover over this city to deliver it, for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake.

[36] And[J] the angel of Jehovah went out, and smote in the

[J] 2 Kings xix. 35 inserts, It came to pass the same night, that.

it.—These words form the close of the first great Messianic prophecy (ix. 7). It is a plausible conjecture of Hitzig's that *vv.* 33, 34 were added by a later editor, the original prophecy ending at *v.* 32. They certainly appear to have been *added later*, but why not by Isaiah himself? They at any rate fit on to *v.* 29 better than *vv.* 30–32. Hitzig's real reason is the unusual definiteness of the prediction in *v.* 34, which, he thinks, is a *vaticinium post eventum*. True, it agrees in its expressions with the prediction in *v.* 7, but it contains nothing to remind us of the statement in *v.* 36.

[33] Comp. xxxi. 8, Hos. i. 7.—**With shields**] 'Shields' were needed against the darts and stones, or the burning torches, thrown out on the besiegers by the besieged. See the illustration from Botta in Bonomi's *Nineveh and its Palaces*, p. 161.—**Nor cast up a bank**] Habakkuk (i. 10) says of the Chaldeans, 'He laugheth at every stronghold, and *heapeth up earth*, and taketh it.'

[35] **I will cover over this city**] An allusion to the figure of the 'hovering birds' in xxxi. 5; so xxxviii. 6.

[36] Destruction of the Assyrians by pestilence. **And the angel of Jehovah went out . . .**] Comp. 2 Sam. xxiv. 15, 16, 'And Jehovah sent a pestilence upon Israel. . . . And the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it;' see also Acts xii. 23. It was a pestilence, then, but not an ordinary one, for, if the present form of the tradition be correct, it did its fell work in a single night. The scene of the catastrophe (always with the same proviso) is the camp of the Tartan before Jerusalem, not that of the King himself in Egypt. The time, according to 2 Kings xix. 35 (see however below), was the night after the Divine revelation had been received by Isaiah.—Commentators of all schools seem to be agreed in treating these Hebrew traditions (the spirit of which is more sacred than the letter) with some freedom; nor can they be blamed, considering the long interval between the events and the Exile-period when the traditions were finally edited. Thus Delitzsch feels justified by the conciseness of the report in assuming an epidemic of long duration in the Assyrian host, comparing the phrase of the Psalmist, 'the pestilence that walketh in darkness' (Ps. xci. 6). Prof. Rawlinson, following Thenius and apparently Ewald, transfers the scene of the pestilence to Pelusium, on the ground of the well-known Herodotean narrative (Herod. ii. 141). Hitzig inclines to reject the words of 2 Kings xix. 35, 'in that night,' as a later addition to the original narrative; Delitzsch thinks that the terms of the promise in *v.* 30 forbid us to interpret the words quoted in (as I venture to think it) their natural sense,[1] and

[1] Thenius, however, thinks that the words in question refer to some notice which

camp of Assyria a hundred and eighty-five thousand; and when men arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses. 37 And Sennacherib, king of Assyria, broke up, and went, and returned, and abode in Nineveh. 38 And it came to pass, as he was worshipping in the house of [d] Nisroch his god, that Adrammelech and Sarezer his sons smote him

[d] Nasarach (v. l. Asarach), Sept.—Mesarach, Sept. of 2 Kings xix. 37.

explains them, with reference to *vv.* 33, 34, as = 'in the night in which the Assyrians encamped before Jerusalem.' Finally, Hitzig and Knobel refer the large number of the dead to a legendary exaggeration. The instances quoted of the large ravages effected by plagues are perhaps not strictly in point, as the difficulty is not so much in the great loss of life as in the large number of what can have been but a mere corps of the entire Assyrian army. The Chronicler, too, simply states that 'Jehovah sent an angel, who cut off every mighty man of valour and leader and captain in the camp of the king of Assyria' (2 Chron. xxxii. 21). We may, I think, combine wisdom with reverence by concluding with Delitzsch that 'the main point (*die Hauptsache*) is that the prophecy in xxxi. 8 was fulfilled,' leaving the details of the event undetermined.——**The camp of Assyria**] There was a place 'within the city' called 'the camp of the Assyrians' in the time of Josephus (*de bello Jud.*, v. 7. 2); but 'Assyrians' in this passage may possibly = 'Syrians,' as in Jos., *Ant.* xiii. 6. 7.

37 **And Sennacherib . . . broke up**] This must not be followed literally. The inscriptions show that Sennacherib lived twenty years after the Egyptian and Jewish expedition, and undertook five more campaigns. All these, however, were in the east, north, or south of the empire, and were therefore as good as non-existent for nations in the west, like the Jews. Among them were several against Babylonia—not against Merodach Baladan, who had been dethroned, but against his son, Nabu-sum-iskun, whom Sennacherib captured alive (Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 205).

38 Murder of Sennacherib. Unfortunately we have no Assyrian account of this; an inscription of Esarhaddon which may have referred to it is fractured in the important part. The following passage, however, is very suggestive: 'From my heart I made a vow. My liver was inflamed with rage. Immediately I wrote letters (saying) that I assumed the sovereignty of my father's house' (*Records of the Past* iii. 103, Talbot). In the next lines Esarhaddon apparently describes his contest for the empire with his brothers, and places the scene of it in the land immediately south of Armenia. —— **Nisroch his god**] This name cannot be identified in the Assyrian pantheon, though M. Oppert formerly read Hea (the Air-god) as Nisroch,[1] an error which

existed in the original source from which the editor of 2 Kings xix. drew, but which he unfortunately omitted. He also conjectures that the statement of the destruction of the Assyrians in a single night is a legend suggested by the words of Isaiah in xvii. 14. If so, however, we should have expected that the instrument of destruction would be a storm. This, in fact, has been suggested by the orthodox Vitringa, though there seems to be no analogy for the use of 'angel of Jehovah' synonymously with 'storm.'

[1] I observe that Prof. Schrader also in 1872 read Nisroch (*Nisruk*) in an inscription of Assurbanipal, where Mr. G. Smith, *History of Assurbanipal*, p. 4, rightly reads Hea, on the ground that the sign commonly read A is now and then used (but ideographically!) for *ru'k* (rather *ru'ku* = 'distant'); see *K. A. T.*, pp. 205–208. M. Oppert, however, now reads *Kin*, with as little reason as Nisroch, as Mr. Sayce kindly

with the sword; and they escaped into the land of Ararat. And Esarhaddon his son became king in his stead.

has been copied by Mr. Budge in *Records of the Past*, xi. 46. Attempts have been made to explain the word Nisroch (see Del. *ad loc.*, and Schrader, *K. A. T.*, pp. 205, 206), but, it seems to me, without success. Most probably Nisroch is a corruption, like Hana and Avvah in xxxvii. 13. Mr. Sayce conjectures that Nusku, a synonym for the god Nebo, may have been the original name (*Theological Review*, 1873, p. 27).——**Adrammelech**] i.e., the Assyrian Adar-malik '(the god) Adar (is) prince.' In 2 Kings xvii. 31 the name of a god of Sepharvaim (Sipar in Babylonian); in this case translate 'Adar—prince.'——**Sarezer**] i.e., Sar(ra)-uçur, a fragment of an Assyrian name, the first part of which probably consisted of the name of some god (comp. Nabopolassar = Nabu-pal-uçur). The lacking name is most probably Nergal,[1] for Abydenus states that the successor of Sinecheribos was Nergilos, who was murdered by his brother Adramelos (Adrammelech), the latter being in his turn put to death by Axerdis (Esarhaddon). Nergal-sarezer occurs as a proper name, Jer. xxxix. 3, 13. It means 'Nergal, protect (or, created) the king.'——**Ararat**] i.e., Armenia, in Assyrian *Urartu*, which lay just beyond the limits of the Assyrian empire or influence.——**Esarhaddon**] The Hebraized form of Asur-akh-iddin, 'Assur gave a brother.' As the Assyrian eponym Canon requires us to date this king's accession in 681 B.C., a presumption arises that the compiler of this chapter was not Isaiah, who in 681 would be almost 100 years old. Del. admits this with regard to *vv.* 37, 38, but why should he stop there?

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE dangerous illness of Hezekiah, the sign of his days being prolonged, his recovery, his thanksgiving-psalm :—such are the contents of this chapter. There is a parallel narrative in 2 Kings xx. 1–11, which is evidently much nearer to the original on which both it and Isa. xxxviii. are based, whether with Delitzsch we regard the latter as having been once as full of details as the former, or with most critics as the work of a hasty[2] copyist. In fact, Isa. xxxviii. in its present form may be considered as virtually an abridgment of 2 Kings xx. 1–11 (see notes).—The date of the events described is settled by *v.* 6. Since, according to 2 Kings xviii. 2, Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, his illness must have occurred in his fourteenth year, and have synchronised, or nearly so, with the invasion

informs me. It is much to be wished that Assyriologists would contract their Hebraizing of the proper names in the Assyrian inscriptions within as narrow limits as possible.

[1] I see that this acute conjecture is sometimes ascribed to Schrader (*K. A. T.*, p. 206), who, however, can well afford to give the credit of priority to a learned American, Dr. Joseph Addison Alexander the commentator on Isaiah (1846).

[2] The haste with which he worked is shown by the misplacement of *vv.* 21, 22, which were omitted by accident between *vv.* 6 and 7, and then restored at the end of the chapter. We have noticed, it is true, a tendency to abridgment throughout this group of narrative chapters, but in chap. xxxviii. the tendency is carried to an extreme, and combined, in the case just referred to, with carelessness.

of Sargon. Whether it preceded or followed the invasion, cannot, of course, be determined with certainty. The mention of fifteen years in *v.* 5 suggests, however (as Bähr has remarked), that Hezekiah had finished his fourteenth year and begun his fifteenth; otherwise there is an appearance of arbitrariness in the prophetic number.[1] In this case, the illness of the king will fall after the invasion, and *v.* 6 must be a late and inharmonious insertion. That *v.* 6 was added by the editor is confirmed by the interruption which it causes to the context, an interruption which does not occur in the parallel, and probably original, passage, xxxvii. 5. The fact is that the latest editor, in whose time the invasion of Sargon was forgotten, made Hezekiah's illness coincide more or less exactly with the invasion of Sennacherib (see p. 193). Remembering this, his insertion of *v.* 6 becomes intelligible.

[1] In those days Hezekiah became sick unto death. And Isaiah the prophet, son of Amoz, came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith Jehovah, Give orders concerning thy household, for thou shalt die and not live. [2] And Hezekiah turned his face unto the wall, and prayed unto Jehovah, [3] and said, Ah, Jehovah, remember, I pray, how I have walked before thee in faithfulness and with a whole heart, and have done that which is good in thine eyes. And Hezekiah wept aloud. [4] And[a] the word of Jehovah came to Isaiah, saying, [5] Go and say to Hezekiah, Thus saith Jehovah, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy

[a] 2 Kings xx. 4 inserts, Before Isaiah was gone out into the middle court.

[2] **Unto the wall**] So, in a different spirit, Ahab, 1 Kings xxi. 4. Compare Lowth's note; he points out that the corner is the place of honour in the East.

[3] **How I have walked . . .**] Contrast Hezekiah's former prayer (xxxvii. 16 &c.). This is a reason for his seeming egotism on this occasion. An early death was the penalty of ungodliness (Ps. lv. 23, Prov. x. 27), and Hezekiah knew that he had been faithful to his God. Hence he can appeal, like Abraham, to the Divine justice. ——**A whole heart**] i.e., one not shared between rival deities, 1 Kings xi. 4. ——**Wept aloud**] Comp. on xxxiii. 7.

[4] According to 2 Kings Hezekiah's death-warrant was suddenly cancelled (if we may use the phrase), before the prophet had reached the outer court of the palace. A striking instance of the conditionalness of prophecy. As Jerome says (on Ezek. xxxiii.), 'Nec statim sequitur, ut, quia propheta prædicit, veniat quod prædixit. Non enim prædixit ut veniat, sed ne veniat.'[2] Generally it is repentance which leads to a revocation of Jehovah's threatenings; here it is the prayer of a righteous man, who was to be

[1] I admit that this view makes the fifteen years added to Hezekiah's life incomplete, the first year being fragmentary. But it is the Hebrew way to count fragments of periods.

[2] Quoted by Oehler, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Eng. Transl.), ii. 361.

tears: behold,[b] I will add to thy days fifteen years. [6] And I will deliver thee and this city out of the [c]hand of the king of Assyria, and I will cover over this city.[d] [7] And this shall be the sign unto thee from Jehovah, that Jehovah will do this thing which he hath spoken: [8] [e]Behold, I will turn the shadow of the steps over which [f]the sun hath gone down[f] on the step-clock of Ahaz, ten steps backward. So the sun returned ten steps on the step-clock, over which (steps) it had gone down.[e]

[b] 2 Kings xx. 5 inserts, I will heal thee; on the third day thou shalt go up into the house of Jehovah; and.

[c] Lit., palm of the hand.

[d] 2 Kings xx. 6 adds, For mine own sake and for David my servant's sake.

[e] 2 Kings xx. 9, 10 reads, Shall the shadow go forward (?) ten steps, or shall it go back ten steps? And Hezekiah said, It is a light thing for the shadow to decline ten steps; nay, but the shadow shall go back ten steps. And Isaiah the prophet called unto Jehovah, and turned back the shadow over the steps which it (?) had gone down on the step-clock of Ahaz ten steps backward.

[f] So Olshausen.—Text has, It (?) hath gone down by reason of the sun.

vv. 7, 8. The sign of the sun's shadow. In 2 Kings this is given with a fuller introduction, and Hezekiah is represented as deliberately choosing that the sun's shadow should 'go back' on the ground that its 'going forward' would by comparison be 'easy.' 'Easy' must here mean 'easy to conceive,' for, of course, both occurrences would be equally extraordinary; but the 'going forward' of the shadow ten degrees would in fact only differ from everyday experience in its suddenness. How the 'sun returned' we are not told. The fact that it is called a 'sign' does not preclude its being a natural, however rare, phenomenon—see 1 Sam. x. 7, where the expression 'signs' is used of natural occurrences, though providentially arranged. On the physical question the reader will do best to consult the notes of Del., Keil, and Thenius:—it would be useless to repeat what has been already so amply investigated and discussed. As Prof. Birks has well said, 'The words themselves leave it open, whether there was a change in the sun's apparent and earth's real motion, a general change by unusual refraction, or one local only. But the last seems likely for several reasons. First, the special mention that it was "in the sun-dial of Ahaz." Next, the envoys from Babylon had heard of it as a local sign, 2 Chr. xxxii. 31. It could not, then, have extended to Babylon' (*Commentary on the Book of Isaiah*, p. 188). The theory of the late Mr. Bosanquet that the phenomenon was due to a solar eclipse, as the same writer truly observes, 'satisfies no condition of the history,' which clearly presupposes a special Divine interposition.

taught that such prayer 'availeth much.'——**Fifteen years**] See Introd.

[6] See Introd., and note on xxxvii. 35.

[8] **The step-clock**] Lit. the steps. There is no doubt that this phrase means some kind of clock, but what kind, is uncertain. Herodotus (ii. 109) states that the sun-dial was the invention of the Babylonians, and this may perhaps be intended here:—in this case, render above 'the shadow of the degrees.' But

[9] Writing of Hezekiah, king of Judah, when he had been sick, and was recovered of his sickness.

it is rather simpler to suppose the clock to have consisted really of 'steps' leading up to a pillar, the shadow of which was employed as a measure of the progress of the sun. In either case, we must suppose the clock to have been arranged not for the twelve hours (like the dial, an invention of the Babylonians), but rather for parts of hours, for otherwise there would not have been space for the shadow to rise or to fall ten steps or degrees equally well. Probably Isaiah is to be understood as speaking about mid-day. It is possible, too, that the motion of the shadow could be observed from the chamber in which Hezekiah was lying. This would make the choice of the sign particularly appropriate. Its ideal significance is, of course, that Jehovah would put back the life-clock of Hezekiah and of the nation, arresting the downward course, of the one towards death, and of the other towards political ruin.

vv. 9–20. The Song of Hezekiah, which is not found in the parallel narrative in 2 Kings, is a peculiarly sweet and plaintive specimen of Hebrew psalmody, but owing to its conciseness is by no means free from difficulty. Zwingli the Reformer gives a happily worded description of it (quoted by Henderson), 'Est autem carmen hoc cum primis doctum et elegans.' It is, in fact, although artistic, not highly original, and shows how strong was the author's affection for the reflective and emotional portion of the sacred literature. But it also shows how closely, in spite of his inferior literary talent, the author approached his predecessors in the far more precious gifts of the Spirit. In the melancholy of its contemplation of death, the poem reminds us partly of the Psalms (see Ps. vi. 5, xxx. 9, lxxxviii. 10–12, xciv. 17, cxv. 17), partly of the Book of Job (e.g., chap. xiv.):—the latter book indeed, seems to have influenced, not only the tone, but even the selection of images and of phraseology in the Song. The proof of this has been given by Delitzsch, who infers from this relation of the two works that to ascribe a later date to the Book of Job than the age of Solomon is henceforth an impossibility.[1] As specimens of the close stylistic affinity between our Song and the Book of Job, take 'the gates of Sheól,' *v.* 10, comparing 'the gates of Death,' Job xxxviii. 17; the image of the body as the house of the soul, *v.* 12, comp. Job iv. 19, 21 (in the latter passage the soul is compared to a tent-rope); that of death as the cutting off of the thread of life, *v.* 12, comp. Job vi. 9, xxvii. 8 (*Q. P. B.*); and of God, when He afflicts man, as a lion, *v.* 13, comp. Job x. 16. Compare, too the image of the weaver's shuttle in Job vii. 6. For the scattered phraseological parallels, see notes on *vv.* 12, 14, 15, 16.

The Song is called a *Miktābh* of Hezekiah (*v.* 9). Some would include it among the psalms 'with artful terms inscribed' (Milton). So e.g. Gesenius, who supposes *bh* and *m* to be interchanged, so that *Miktābh* = *Miktām*. But the roots *kāthabh* and *kātham* do not appear to be interchanged, so

[1] Drechsler, *Der Prophet Jesaja*, ii. 2, pp. 220, 221 (*Anhang* or Appendix, by Delitzsch). The position is fully tenable, but is not beyond the reach of critical objection. This point, however, I must reserve for consideration elsewhere.

that it would be better to suppose *bh* in *Miktābh* to be a corruption of the *m* in *Miktām*. But even this is hardly more than plausible, since the context leads us to expect an emphatic statement of the authorship of Hezekiah. The literary character here attributed to that king will not surprise the reader who remembers that a collection of Solomonic proverbs is ascribed to the zeal of Hezekiah (Prov. xxv. 1), as well as the revival of the liturgical use of the psalms of David and Asaph (2 Chr. xxix. 30).

Four stanzas or strophes are clearly discernible (I. *vv.* 10–12, II. *vv.* 12–14, III. *vv.* 15–17, IV. *vv.* 18–20).[1] In the two first the poet recalls his despairing condition immediately before the Divine promise of recovery reached him; in the two last, he revels in the joy and gratitude called forth by the re-creating word of Jehovah's prophet. There is no reference to the 'sign' of the 'step-clock,' a remarkable omission, as to which see note on *v.* 16.

10 I said, '[g] In the noontide [g] of my days I must depart into
the gates of Sheól; I have been mulcted of the residue of my
years.' 11 I said, 'I shall not see [h] Jah, [even] Jah [h] in the land

[g] Lit., In the stillness.—In dimidio, Vulg. (similarly Pesh.).—In the height (i.e., zenith), Sept.

[h] The second 'Jah' is omitted in one MS. (de Rossi) and Pesh. One MS. of Kennicott and one of de Rossi read, once, Jehovah, and Jerome states that this was the reading in his Hebr. MS. Sept. substitutes, The salvation of God (comp. xl. 5, Sept.).

10 **In the noontide of my days**] Midway in life to Hezekiah, as to Dante, came his peril of death. 'Noon-tide' he expresses poetically by 'pause'; it is the time when the sun appears to stand still in the zenith. He has now outpassed by four years the middle of the period assigned by the psalmist (Ps. xc. 10) to human life, but it is still noon-tide in his consciousness, when the sudden blow falls.—To some this appears a far-fetched explanation, but in Josh. x. 12 we have the famous command, 'Sun, in Gibeon be still,' for 'stand still.' The alternative is to take 'in the stillness of my days' = 'when my days were gliding quietly along,' with reference either to the withdrawal of the Assyrians, as Ges. (which is probably against chronology), or to the 'even tenor' of a healthy life, as Del. The meaning adopted above, besides being highly poetical and in perfect accordance with chronology, is favoured by the expression 'the residue of my days' at the end of the verse.——**The gates of Sheól**] The Assyrians, too, like the Hebrews, represented their Hades as a city or fortress. 'Seven walls encircle it, each with its gate and porter, its outer wall being a watery moat' (comp. Acheron); Boscawen, *Transactions Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, iv. 290. Comp. 'the gates of Hades,' Matt. xvi. 18, and 'the gates of Death,' Ps. ix. 13, cvii. 18, Job xxxviii. 17; and see note on xiv. 9.

11 **I shall not see Jah . . .**] Comp. i. 12. There 'to see Jehovah's face' was a purely imaginary seeing, identifiable with formal attendance in the sanctuary. Here it is the seeing of experience, as in

[1] See Ewald, *Die dichter des alten bundes*, i. 1, pp. 161–165. The reader will look in vain for the Song in the great critic's rearrangement of the Book of Isaiah in his work on the Prophets.

of the living; I shall behold man no more with the inhabitants of the [l] world.' 12 [k] My habitation [k] is plucked up and carried off from me like a shepherd's tent; I have rolled up, like a weaver, my life; from the warp he will cut me off: from day to night thou wilt make an end of me.

13 [l] I cried out for help [l] until the morning, 'As a lion; so

[l] So several MSS., Ew., Hupfeld (on Ps. xvii. 14), Del. (second ed.).—Hebr. text has, Cessation, i.e., the land of Cessation (of activity). Two letters are transposed.

[k] So Ges., Del., Naeg.—My time (i.e., life-period), Ew., Kay.

[l] So Targ., Lowth, Hupfeld (on Ps. cxxxi. 2).—Hebr. text, I smoothed down (my soul?), Del., Naeg.; or, I thought (?), Ew., Kay.

that vigorous aposiopesis of the psalmist (Ps. xxvii. 13), 'If I did not believe to see the goodness of Jehovah in the land of the living!' ——**Jah, Jah**] There is the same discrepancy among the ancient authorities as in xii. 2 (see note [h]), but the rhythm is improved by the repetition, which may be paralleled by that of 'bitter' in *v.* 17, and 'the living' in *v.* 19. The Sept. translator sought, characteristically, to conceal the anthropomorphism (comp. crit. note on i. 12).——**In the land of the living**] Implying that 'the goodness of Jehovah' is not to be 'seen' or experienced in the Underworld (comp. *vv.* 18, 19).

12 **My habitation**] The word is not common in this sense, but the poet is also a master of language, and prefers uncommon to familiar expressions. The rend. 'age' cannot be legitimated philologically; also it hardly accords with the verbs which follow, though we do find the idea of time materialised as it were in Ps. xxxix. 5 (6), Matt. vi. 27 (*Q. P. B.*).——**Plucked up**] The figure is taken from the nomadic life, comp. xxxiii. 20. Besides Job iv. 21, comp. Ps. lii. 5 (*Q. P. B.*), 2 Cor. v. 1, 4, 2 Pet. i. 13, 14.——**Carried off**] As if into exile.——**I have rolled up**] I have been earnestly engaged in maturing my life-work, 'rolling up' the web as it advanced; it is just half-finished, when Jehovah takes up the fatal scissors (Kay, Naeg.). The ordinary explanation, 'I regard my life as already "rolled up" and done with, so certain am I of death,' seems to me forced; while Umbreit's (proposed, I think, for alt. rendering, but available for that here adopted), 'I deliberately adopt God's will for my own,' is opposed to the whole spirit of the poem. See, however, crit. note.——**He will cut me off**] The speaker shrinks from naming God as the author of his calamity, comp. Job iii. 20 (Ew.). The same word is used in Job vi. 9, and, in a different conjugation, Job xxvii. 8.——**From day to night**] He expects this severe illness to run its course in a single day. Comp. Job iv. 20.

13 **I cried out for help**] So, in accordance with usage, and not merely 'I cried out' (comparing Ps. xxxviii. 9, Job iii. 24, where the phrase is different), we must render *shivva'tti*. The sick man appeals against the fate which threatens him, appeals—to whom? To God (comp. *v.* 3)—to God against Himself; to the essential mercy, against the apparent cruelty, of Jehovah. So again in *v.* 14. It is the characteristic irony of faith. In Dr. Mozley's words (*Essays*, i. 217), 'The apparent doubt only expresses more strongly the real faith; the protest against injustice and harshness, the sense of absolute goodness and ineffable mercy.'—The rend. of Del., Naeg., &c., based upon the text-reading, requires us to suppose an unnatural ellipsis. Ps. cxxxi. 2, which is quoted in its favour, is not really favourable, for there we read, 'I have smoothed *my soul*,' without

will he break all my bones: from day to night thou wilt make an end of me.' 14 Like a [m]swift, (like) a crane, so did I scream; I did moan like a dove; mine eyes looked languishingly towards the height; Jehovah, I am hard-pressed, be surety for me.

[m] So Tristram.

any ellipsis. It is, moreover, quite opposed to the context, which by no means indicates patience as a quality of the speaker. The analogy, too, of 'I said' in *vv.* 10, 11 suggests some similar introduction to the vehement exclamation which follows. —— **Until the morning**] His illness did not run its course so quickly as he had expected. He is still alive the next morning, but cannot expect, as the second half of the verse declares, to outlive this second day. —— **As a lion**] The accents connect this with the preceding words, but here, as in other instances, the necessities of rhythm have led to a violation of logical sequence.

14 **Like a swift, (like) a crane . . .**] The conjunction of these two kinds of birds is remarkable, as their notes are in most respects very different, though not more different than those of the bear and the dove, which are conjoined as similes for groaning in lix. 11. The note of the swift (a bird of the swallow-tribe) is shrill, that of the crane is resonant but deep. One single verb is used zeugmatically for both; the Hebr. (*çiçĕf*) properly signifies a shrill but penetrating sound, and is therefore more applicable to the stridulous cry of the swift than to the deep, trumpet-like blast of the crane. Both notes, however, agree in their penetrating quality, and the zeugma in 'did I scream' is not more striking than others. The swift and the crane are both mentioned again together with the turtle-dove by Jeremiah (viii. 7), with reference to their migratory habits; this suggests that the sacred poet is here alluding to the cries which the two former birds emit in setting forth on their migrations.—The word for 'did I scream' is in viii. 19, ix. 4 used of the thin feeble voice natural to ghosts and assumed by necromancers, and in x. 14 at any rate connotes feebleness of sound. On this some critics have based an objection to rendering *'ăgûr* by 'crane,' but wrongly; for the note of the swift as well as of the crane is described as loud. It must therefore be the quality and not the strength of the notes of these birds which is referred to; in fact, the penetrating quality mentioned above. (On the note of the swift, see Wood's *Illustrated Natural History: Birds*, p. 131; on that of the crane, see the same work, p. 671, and *Encyclopædia Britannica*, ninth ed., vol. vi. p. 546. The peculiar note of the crane is ascribed to the unusual formation of its trachea.) —— **Mine eyes looked languishingly . . .**] A half-despairing look is for some time all that he is equal to.—This is not to be taken as the turning-point in the speaker's sufferings (Naeg.), as if he only now ventured to appeal to Jehovah; the three first clauses in *v.* 14 are co-ordinated. Hezekiah has all along fixed his hope in Jehovah (comp. on beginning of *v.* 13), though it only now forces for itself an utterance. —— **The height**] Where Jehovah dwells (xxxiii. 5, lvii. 15). —— **Be surety for me**] The sick man thinks of his prototype Job, who, after very similar complaints, makes the very same petition (Job xvii. 3, comp. Ps. cxix. 122). The image is that of a debtor who is being carried to prison (Matt. xviii. 30). But what a deep thought is involved here in the application! For He who is asked to interpose as a surety is, in Hezekiah's case, at the same

15 What shall I say? He hath both promised unto me
and himself hath performed it! I shall walk at ease all my
years [n] in spite of [n] the bitterness of my soul. 16 O Lord, by
such things (?) they live, and [o] altogether in them (?) is the
life of my spirit [o]; and so thou dost recover me, and [p] dost make
me to live. [p] 17 Behold, [q] for (my) welfare was it (so) bitter to
me, (so) bitter [q]; and thou hast [r] kept back [r] my soul from the

[n] So Ew.—Because of, Naeg.; (which shall follow) upon, Del.
[o] Therein hath everyone the life of his spirit, Ew. (reading 'his' for 'my').
[p] This translation is reached either by reading a *Tâv* instead of a *Hê*, or, better, by taking the imperfect of Hebr. text as that of assurance, with Hitzig.
[q] My anguish is changed into ease, Lowth, Graetz.
[r] So Sept., Vulg., Lowth, Ew.—Hebr. text has, Loved.

time the creditor. It is the irony of the believer which we met with above (*v.* 13).

15 Meantime an answer of peace has been quickly sent.——**What shall I say?**] 'I am at a loss how to express my wonder and my gratitude.' Comp. Gen. xliv. 16, 2 Sam. vii. 20.——**Promised**] Alluding to the promise of Isaiah in *vv.* 5–8.——**I shall walk at ease**] With leisurely pace, undisturbed, as if in a festal procession; comp. 'And I will walk at liberty' (i.e. freely), Ps. cxix. 45. It is not necessary to suppose a special reference to the processions of worshippers to the temple (as Ew., Naeg.), in spite of Ps. xlii. 5, where the same word occurs. It is the 'walk of our life' which is meant. The same figure, which must remind us of stately Italian pictures, recurs in xxxv. 9 *b*, lv. 12 *a*, with reference to Jehovah's 'freed ones.' The root-idea of the very uncommon Hebr. word (*'eddaddeh*) is 'to impel'; this is qualified by the reflexive conjugation. See Del. on Ps. xlii. 5, and comp. *Notes and Criticisms*, p. 18.——**All my years**] All my remaining years.

16 **By such things . . .**] 'Not by bread alone doth man live, but by everything which proceedeth out of the mouth of Jehovah' (Deut. viii. 3, quoted by Ew.). Hezekiah *now* has full confidence in Jehovah's power; 'He speaketh and it is done.' The sign asked for in *vv.* 7, 8 is forgotten; it was, in fact, a symptom of spiritual weakness (vii. 11, comp. *v.* 9). 'By such things,' i.e., such words as those of Jehovah's prophet, which carry with them their own fulfilment (see on ix. 8), men both come into existence and are preserved alive.—This explanation suits the context, but is not free from objection, as the Hebr. of the two first clauses of the verse does not read naturally, and is probably corrupt. Ew.'s conjecture (see above) is simple and plausible, but the difficulty to me lies in the two words which he leaves untouched.——**And so thou dost . . .**] The application of the general truth that God is the source of all life to the particular case of the speaker.

17 **For (my) welfare . . .**] My welfare, my true peace (peace and welfare being equivalent ideas in Hebrew), was the end for which my trouble was sent. Comp. Job v. 17, 18.——**Was it (so) bitter to me, (so) bitter**] A repetition of the same word, as in *vv.* 11, 18. Perhaps the writer may intend to suggest a second meaning—'mutata est mihi amaritudo' (see note).——**Hast kept back**] The pronunciation of the two rival readings is very nearly the same (*khâsaktâ—khâshaqtâ*), but that adopted above is at once the more natural in itself, and is supported by Ps. lxxviii. 50, and still more strongly by Job xxxiii. 18. According to

pit of destruction; for thou hast cast behind thy back all my sins.

18 For Sheól cannot give thanks to thee, Death cannot praise thee; those who have gone down to the grave cannot hope for thy faithfulness: 19 the living, the living, he can give thanks to thee, as I do this day: the father to the children shall make known thy faithfulness. 20 Jehovah is ready to deliver me: and my stringed instruments will we strike all the days of our life in the house of Jehovah.

21 And Isaiah said, *Let them bring a cake of figs, and

*2 Kings xx. 7 reads, Fetch ye a cake of figs; and they fetched and applied it to the boil, and he recovered. (In 2 Kings the equivalent of *vv.* 21, 22 stands immediately after the prophetic promise of Isaiah.)

the text-reading (an error of the ear as I venture to think, and due perhaps to dictation) we have a pregnant construction; 'hast loved' = 'hast lovingly drawn,' 'as if the love of God, shining on the soul, had made it ascend out of the power of death' (Kay). A similar phrase in 2 Sam. xviii. 9 (Hebr.).——**Hast cast all my sins . . .**] A similar figure for the pardon of sin in Mic. vii. 19. The connection of the clause ('*for* thou hast cast') is remarkable; Hezekiah evidently regards his peril of death as the punishment of his sins, see on *v.* 10.

18 Jehovah delighteth in praises; *therefore* he held back so praiseful a servant from descending into Sheól. —— **Shéol cannot give thanks to thee . . .**] The form of expression is mythological, as Del. truly remarks; the same conjunction of Sheól and Death, personified on a mythic basis, meets us in xxviii. 15, Ps. vi. 5 ('hell' and 'the grave' of A. V. should be Sheól or the Underworld); comp. Job xxviii. 22 ('Abaddon and Death'). Hezekiah is not, however, an unconscious Sadducee; death is not to him annihilation. He believes in a future state, but in one without consciousness of God's presence, and consequently without moral or intellectual energy. The dismay with which he contemplates departure from this world is a measure of the value he sets on personal communion with God:—such dismay is (from a Christian point of view) one element in God's education of the Jews for final 'illumination' of 'life and immortality' (2 Tim. i. 10, in the Greek).

19 **The living . . . can give thanks**] Life, according to Hezekiah, is a constant succession of benefits and thanksgivings.——**The father to the children**] We need not ask (for we cannot possibly determine the point) whether Hezekiah had any children at this time. It is one of the familiar sentiments of the psalmists which is here reiterated; see Ps. xxii. 31, lxxviii. 3, 4.

20 **Is ready to deliver me**] Or, was ready; but, as the context relates to the future, it is better to suppose the poet to be taking a hopeful prospect. Comp. xxxiii. 6, 'a store of salvations.'——**Will we strike . . . in the house of Jehovah**] 'The house of Jehovah' may be here a symbolical expression for that communion with God which the psalmists sometimes describe in similar language (Ps. v. 7, xv. 1, xxiii. 6, xxvii. 4). In this case 'we' will mean the royal poet and his family. Or if Hezekiah had none as yet, he perhaps identifies himself with the Levitical musicians, in whom, for the sake of the temple-service, he took so deep an interest, 2 Chr. xxix. 30.

21-22 **And Isaiah said . . .**] These facts are evidently out of

let them bind (and apply it) to the boil, that he may recover.[s]
22 And Hezekiah said, What is the sign [t] that I shall go up to the house of Jehovah [t]?

[s] 2 Kings xx. 8 reads, That Jehovah will heal me, and that I go up to the house of Jehovah the third day.

their place, a difficulty evaded in A. V. by the inaccurate rendering, 'For Isaiah had said.' The true explanation was long ago seen by Bishop Lowth. 'The narration of this chapter,' he remarks in his note on xxxviii. 4, 5, 'seems to be in some parts an abridgment of that of 2 Kings xx. The abridger, having finished his extract here with the 11th verse, seems to have observed that the 7th and 8th verses of 2 Kings xx. were wanted to complete the narration; he therefore added them at the end of the chapter, after he had inserted the song of Hezekiah, probably with marks for their insertion in their proper places; which marks were afterwards neglected by transcribers. Or a transcriber might omit them by mistake, and add them at the end of the chapter with such marks. Many transpositions[1] are, with great probability, to be accounted for in the same way.' The 'abridger' did not, however, in these verses, simply transcribe the text of 2 Kings (or the still earlier narrative on which 2 Kings and 'Isaiah' may both be based). The characteristic differences of *v.* 21 make the original mistake of its position somewhat less perceptible.——**A cake of figs**] Many commentators suppose the figs to be mentioned as a remedy current at the time. But surely so simple and unscientific a medicine would have been thought of, without applying to the prophet, by those about Hezekiah. The plaster of figs is rather a sign or symbol of the cure, like the water of the Jordan in the narrative of Naaman (2 Kings v. 10).——**The boil**] 'Non patet ex historiâ, cujus generis hæc fuerit inflammatio pestifera et lethifera, et difficile est id assequi per conjecturam' (Vitringa). Hitzig and Knobel too hastily assume this to be the plague-boil, and that the plague is the same which carried off the army of Sennacherib (?). But not only is this theory against chronology (we are not yet in the period of Sennacherib, see Introd.), but the Hebr. word for 'boil' (*sh'khin*) is used of various kinds of eruptions (see e.g., Ex. ix. 9, Job ii. 7), but not of the plague-boil.——**That he may recover**] The reading in 2 Kings is an anticipatory notice, vii. 1, xx. 1.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

As we have already seen (p. 195), the embassy of Merodach Baladan to Hezekiah is most naturally explained by referring it to the period of the invasion of *Sargon*. That the illness of Hezekiah synchronises with this event seems to be proved by the terms of the promise in xxxviii. 5, and the first verse of chap. xxxix. distinctly connects the Babylonian embassy with Hezekiah's illness. Sargon himself too, as already stated, lays great stress on the numerous embassies sent by Merodach

[1] Gesenius (on *vv.* 7, 8) gives an excellent instance of this transposition in Job xxxi. 38–40, which evidently ought to stand a few verses back. (Merx places them between *vv.* 32 and 33.)

Baladan to the various kings opposed to Assyria. It is, however, a singular fact that Sennacherib, as well as Sargon, mentions the trouble which he had with a king of Babylon called Merodach Baladan. In the Nebbi Yunus inscription, for instance, after returning thanks to Asshur, he at once passes to 'Marduk-bal-iddina, king of the land of Gan-dunias' (i.e., lower Chaldæa), of whom he says, 'The Chaldæans and Aramæans, with the army of Elam his help, like corn I swept; he, to the land of the sea, alone fled, &c.'[1] Hence Prof. Schrader (who, in 1872, still believed that the narrative in Isa. xxxvii. referred, mainly at least, to the invasion of Sennacherib) proposed to distinguish the Merodach Baladan of Sennacherib's annals from the king of that name mentioned by Sargon, and to identify the former with the Merodach Baladan of Isa. xxxix. There was some plausibility in this suggestion. The repeated escapes and reassumptions of the crown, which the theory of there being only one Merodach Baladan during the reigns of both Sargon and Sennacherib compels us to admit, were almost too romantic for an English or a German, though not for a French, historian; and as a matter of fact, Merodach Baladan was not an uncommon name of Babylonian kings.[2] But even Prof. Schrader has been converted to this view, as a consequence of his adoption of Mr. Sayce's hypothesis respecting the invasion of Judah referred to in Isa. xxxvii. xxxviii.[3] M. Lenormant has all along maintained the identity of the Merodach Baladans of Sargon and Sennacherib. To his skilfully written *étude* I have already (p. 199) referred the reader; one or two facts have since been added by Mr. St. Chad Boscawen, from whom I borrow the following supplement to my sketch of the historical circumstances of this group of chapters.

'From an inscription of the Assyrian monarch Tiglath Pileser II. (*W. A. I.*, ii. 67, line 26, obv.), it appears that the family of Merodach Baladan ruled in southern Babylonia, on the shores of the Persian Gulf. In the inscription referred to, the Assyrian king stated that he received tribute of Merodach Baladan, son of Yakin, king of the 'land of the sea,' that is, of the shores of the Persian Gulf. This district of the marshlands of the delta formed, for a period of many centuries, the place of refuge for fugitive rebels against the Assyrians, and it was here that was situated the province of Bit Yakin, the home of the tribe of Yakin; and in B.C. 751, Tiglath Pileser exacted tribute from the then ruling prince, Merodach Baladan.

'On the overthrow of Shalmaneser III. by Sargon, or during the years of weak rule, B.C. 725–722, when the Assyrian armies were chiefly engaged in the siege of the important Syrian town of Samaria, and

[1] Translated by Budge, *Records of the Past*, xi. 50.

[2] Mr. Rodwell has translated an inscription of 'Merodach Baladan III.,' dated about B.C. 1340. See also the list of Babylonian kings prefixed to G. Smith's *History of Babylonia*.

[3] In *K. A. T.*, p. 201, Dr. Schrader had already observed that the conquest of Hamath and Arpad (mentioned in Isa. xxxvii. 13, x. 9) could not have been claimed on behalf of Sennacherib, and in a review-article he had expressed himself still more strongly in favour of Mr. Sayce's theory, while rejecting the date which Mr. Sayce, in a German periodical, had proposed for Sargon's invasion. (See reference on p. 194 note [2].)

consequently Babylonia was neglected, Merodach Baladan seized the Babylonian throne . . . Sargon, having captured Samaria, made an expedition against the new occupant of the Babylonian throne, but does not appear to have met with any great success . . . In his twelfth campaign, which took place in B.C. 710, the Assyrian monarch states that he defeated Merodach Baladan, and forced him to flee to Cyprus; and after a long and victorious war in Babylonia, he states that, in the thirteenth year of his reign as king of Assyria, he captured the city of Su-an-na (an ancient name of Babylon), and proclaimed himself king of Babylon, as well as of the Assyrian empire. This dualism of rule is shown by a tablet, K 5280, which bears date as follows :—"Registered at Kalah (Nimroud), eponym of Bele, 13th year of Sargon, king of Assyria, 1st year king of Babylon." Thus the year of Merodach Baladan ended in his twelfth year, B.C. 710, and thus the monuments confirm the Canon of Ptolemy.[1] This is [further] confirmed by the dates found on some small terra-cotta olives, now in the Louvre, which relate to the sale of some women at Babylon. . . .

'Though Ptolemy is no doubt correct in making the reign of Merodach Baladan end in B.C. 710, it does not appear that he was killed until some years after. Sargon assumed the government in Babylon in B.C. 709, and reigned five years, until B.C. 705, when he died, and his son Sennacherib succeeded him as King of Assyria. On the death of Sargon, the fugitive Babylonian monarch Merodach Baladan returned, and attempted to seize the throne of Babylon. In this he was for a time successful, but Sennacherib, in B.C. 704, drove him out of Babylon, and forced him to fly to his old home among the marshes in the delta, to the seat of his old kingdom of the sea-coast. Here among his own people he was so well protected that he was not found by the Assyrian monarch. Sennacherib then placed on the Babylonian throne a person called Belibni, who was the Belibus of the Canon of Ptolemy. This person reigned two years, B.C. 703–702, having ascended the throne in the latter part of B.C. 703. Now it is possible that, though defeated and dethroned, Merodach Baladan never relinquished his claim to the Babylonian throne, but counted his regnal years all the same from his accession in B.C. 722. . . .

'On the death of Sargon and accession of Sennacherib, Merodach Baladan raised a revolt in Babylonia, the expedition to suppress which formed the first campaign of Sennacherib in B.C. 704–3. . . . This had the desired effect, in that the Assyrian king marched against Hezekiah in his third campaign, and, having subdued him in his fourth campaign, he defeats his southern rebels in the revolts of Suzdub and Merodach Baladan.'[2] This was in B.C. 701–700.

Accuracy of narrative in chap. xxxix.—Two points at any rate

[1] The Canon of Ptolemy is a chronological work, with astronomical notes, beginning with the foundation of the middle Babylonian empire by Nabonassar in B.C. 747. In spite of certain artificial arrangements, it is a valuable historical document, and stands the test of comparison with the Assyrian Canon. See chap. v. of the late Mr. George Smith's work, *The Assyrian Eponym Canon* (Lond., Bagsters, 1876).

[2] 'Babylonian Dated Tablets and the Canon of Ptolemy,' by W. St. Chad Boscawen (*Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vol. vi. 1878, pp. 15–18).

must be admitted, 1. that there is a basis of tradition to the narrative (Merodach Baladan could not have left Hezekiah out of his negotiations); and 2. that the ideas which it enforces are those of the main current of the prophetic revelation. But there are also two points in which a later colouring, due to the editor, may be suspected, however unable we may be to arrive at a complete settlement of the question. 1. The leading political figure on the side of Judah is here the king, whereas elsewhere the direction of the state is in the hands of 'the house of David,' 'the princes,' 'the men of scorn who rule this people' (see notes on vii. 13, xxviii. 14–22, xxxii. 1). 2. The prediction of the subjugation of Judah by the king of Babylon is, for several reasons, unconnected with theology, not easily credible as an utterance of Isaiah (see below on *vv.* 5–7).

1 At that time [a] Merodach Baladan, son of Baladan, king of Babylon, sent a letter [b] and a present to Hezekiah; for he had heard that he had been sick, and had recovered. 2 And Hezekiah rejoiced because of them, and showed them his storehouse, the silver, and the gold, and the spices, and the

[a] 2 Kings xx. 12 reads Berodach. (An error of the ear).
[b] Sept. inserts, And ambassadors. So Lowth.

1 **Merodach Baladan**] The Hebraized form of the Babylonian Marduk-bal-iddina, i.e., 'Marduk[1] gave a son;' comp. Nabu-bal-iddina 'Nabu (Nebo) gave a son'—another Babylonian name. In the Canon of Ptolemy the former name appears as Mardokempados, or, as Ewald (*History*, iv. 187) corrects the reading, Mardokempalados. ——**Son of Baladan**] Sargon indeed calls his Babylonian enemy 'son of Yakin,' from which most have concluded that the Biblical statement was erroneous, and implies a misinterpretation of the name Merodach Baladan. Considering, however, that Merodach Baladan was the hereditary king of Bit Yakin, it is more natural to suppose that 'Son of Yakin' merely specifies the tribe to which the king belonged, just as, in the narrative referred to on xxxvii. 12, 'Son of Adini' is a tribal appellation.[2] 'Son of Baladan' may therefore be genealogically correct.——**For he had heard**] Lit. 'and he heard'; appending the cause to the effect, as 2 Sam. xiv. 5 (Del.). In 2 Kings xx. 12, the simpler form of expression, 'for he had heard,' is used.—Another ostensible motive for the embassy is mentioned in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31, viz., 'to enquire of the portent that had taken place in the land,' i.e., of the phenomenon on the step-clock. The real motive was neither benevolence nor scientific curiosity, but political foresight (see p. 195). Hence 'the presents,' *v.* 1, comp. xxx. 6. So Josephus, *Ant.* x. 2, 2.

2 **Because of them**] i.e., because of the ambassadors; see note [b]. ——**Showed them his storehouse**] The fact that Hezekiah's treasury is still full proves that the Babylo-

[1] Marduk (Merodach) was originally a solar deity, but afterwards regarded as the god of the planet Jupiter.
[2] The famous 'Jehu, Son of Omri' (Yahua, Son of Khumri) must be explained on these analogies; Khumri (Omri) means the people of Bit Khumri, i.e. of Samaria. There is, therefore, no discrepancy between 1 Kings ix., which represents Jehu as the founder of a new dynasty, and the Assyrian inscriptions. See Schrader, *Keilinschriften und Geschichtsforschung*, p. 207; Boscawen, *Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, vi. 16.

fine oil, and the whole of his armoury, and all that was found among his treasures: there was nothing in his house, or in the whole of his dominion, that Hezekiah showed them not. 3 Then came Isaiah the prophet unto king Hezekiah, and said unto him, What have these men said, and whence come they unto thee? And Hezekiah said, From a far country have they come unto me, even from Babylon. 4 And he said, What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah said, All that is in my house they have seen: there is nothing among my treasures which I have not showed them. 5 And Isaiah said unto Hezekiah, Hear the word of Jehovah Sabáoth: 6 Behold, the days are coming when all that is in thy house,

nian embassy must have preceded the tribute to Sargon.——**His armoury**] See xxii. 8.—**In the whole of his dominion**] The whole kingdom having been taxed to keep up the stores of the capital.

3 **What have these men said . . .**] Isaiah, with that fearless assumption of a superior position which we have noticed in chap. vii., at once challenges the king to explain his conduct. Jehovah's will is opposed to all coquetting with foreign powers (comp. xxx. 1). That the ambassadors are still in Jerusalem appears from '*these* men.'——**From a far country**] 'As though he would make his hospitality seem a duty' (Strachey): he could not show the door to strangers from such 'a far land!' Hezekiah does not directly meet the suspicion implied in Isaiah's first question. He knows denial would be useless, and would bring upon him the woe denounced on those who 'deeply hide their purpose from Jehovah' (xxix. 15).

5 **And Isaiah said . . .**] The prophet is evidently displeased with Hezekiah; but why? The Chronicler says it is because the king's 'heart was lifted up' (2 Chron. xxxii. 25), i.e., on account of the vanity implied in the king's exhibition of his treasures. This is no doubt an important element of the truth (comp. ii. 12–17). But was it merely vanity which prompted the king thus to throw open his treasuries? Surely not. It was to satisfy the emissaries of Merodach Baladan that Hezekiah had considerable resources, and was worthy of becoming his ally on equal terms. Isaiah, who saw so deeply into the heart of his contemporaries, no doubt read this in Hezekiah's conduct. To him, as a prophet of Jehovah, the king's fault was principally in allowing himself to be courted by a foreign potentate, as if it were not true that 'Jehovah had founded Zion,' and that 'the afflicted of his people could find refuge therein' (xiv. 32). His punishment should be corresponding to his sin. He thought to subscribe his qucta to a profane coalition, and his treasures should be violently laid hold upon by 'wolves in sheeps' clothing.' Babylon had solicited friendship; she would end by enforcing slavery. Calm and dispassionate is the tone in which the prophet speaks. Charles the Great could not help weeping at the sight of the Northmen's vessels, prognosticating the calamities which those fell pirates would bring on the flourishing coasts of the Franks.[1]

[1] It is Dr. Rowland Williams (*Hebrew Prophets*, i. 429) who quotes the story of Charles the Great. But the object with which he quotes it is not my own. According to him, it needed no stronger a presentiment to foretell the Babylonian captivity than to anticipate the ravages of the Northmen. But with Isaiah it is not a mere presenti-

and that which thy fathers have treasured up shall be carried away to Babylon: nothing shall be left, saith Jehovah. 7 And

Jeremiah, himself a prophet, weeps at the thought of the cruelty of the Babylonians. But in Isaiah, contentment with the perfect will of God overpowers his emotional susceptibility; and whether he wrote chaps. xl.–lxvi. or not, it must at any rate be granted that he had a profound conviction of the irrevocable election of Jehovah's people (see vi. 13). That conviction was his stay in the prospect of temporary ruin for the kingdom of Judah. (This is written on the assumption that the report of Isaiah's words in this chapter is in the main accurate. Granting that he foresaw the Babylonian captivity, I see nothing to be surprised at in the tone in which it is announced.)

6 **Shall be carried away to Babylon**] A very striking circumstantial prediction. If we could be quite sure that it really proceeded from Isaiah, it would represent perhaps (together with vii. 8*b*) the highest point which that prophet's insight into the future attained, since it distinctly asserts that, not the Assyrians, then at the height of their power, but the Babylonians, shall be the instruments of the Divine vengeance. We must not attempt to weaken the force of the prediction by making 'king of Babylon,' in *v.* 7, equivalent to 'king of Assyria' (as one might speak of the Prince of Wales under his second title of Duke of Cornwall), for Sargon's second title of king of Babylon dates (see above, p. 226) from the dethronement, in B.C. 710, of Merodach Baladan, whose embassy supplies the starting-point of the narrative; and even if Isaiah foresaw the assumption of the crown of Babylon by Sargon, still he could not apply the title 'king of Babylon' to Sargon by anticipation, without hopelessly mystifying Hezekiah. 'The king of Babylon,' in the prediction here ascribed to Isaiah, means the lord of that great world-empire (to adopt a convenient hyperbole) which succeeded Assyria; and the use of this expression implies that Isaiah foresaw the transference of power from Nineveh to Babylon. To Ewald, such a degree of foresight appears only natural, 'inasmuch as that state [Babylon], though often in dispute with Nineveh, was yet by its peculiar position . . . too closely entwined with Assyria, and it was really only a question whether Nineveh or Babylon should be the seat of universal dominion.'[1] Looking back from the vantage-ground of history, such an inference from the position of Babylon may appear only natural, but I doubt whether it can be called probable. The 'question' mentioned by Ewald had not yet 'come within the range of practical politics.' Assyria had shown no signs of weakness; Babylonia's ablest monarch, Merodach Baladan, was on the verge of that calamity which was announced in solemn tones by Isaiah himself (xxi. 1–10). If the writer of xxi. 9, 10 did foresee the transference of the centre of power, it can only be called an extra-natural or supernatural phenomenon.[2]

ment; it is a calm and settled conviction, based on a direct revelation, and confirmed by a deep insight into the laws of the Divine government.

[1] *History of Israel*, iv. 188. Ewald continues: 'It accordingly *flashed like lightning* across Isaiah's mind that Babylon, attracted by those very treasures, &c., might in the future become dangerous to that same kingdom of Judah which it was now flattering.' (One is compelled sometimes to abridge the involved sentences of this great historical critic, but weak stylist).

[2] Sir Edward Strachey, a thoughtful as well as reverent student of Isaiah, actually holds that, both here and in xiv. 4, 'king of Babylon' = 'king of Assyria.' This startling identification (see my remark above, p. 79) he defends by supposing that 'Babylon' throughout Isaiah is 'a monogram or ideograph' (the figure will be clear to

of thy sons, who shall issue from thee, whom thou shalt beget, shall they take away, and they shall become [c] chamberlains

[c] Lit., eunuchs.

I have no theological prejudice against the admission of this high-water mark of Isaiah's foreknowledge, but for several reasons it appears to me improbable that he uttered this prophecy. For (1) I can find no analogy for it in the great age of prophecy. The famous prophecy in Micah (iv. 10), 'Be in pain, and labour to bring forth, O daughter of Zion . . . and thou shalt go to Babylon,' is not a parallel passage, for the context shows that Babylon is mentioned there only as a part of the Assyrian empire (see Mic. v. 5, 6). (2) In xxi. 1–10 Isaiah announces the fall of Merodach Baladan's kingdom of Babylon. How can Hezekiah have harmonised such apparently inconsistent predictions as the fall of Babylon and the subjugation of Judah by Babylon? Yet even if predictions be intended partly for future readers, they are still primarily addressed to the prophet's contemporaries. Would Isaiah have thrown his royal friend and disciple into dire perplexity for the sake of generations yet unborn? (3) As a matter of fact, Hezekiah delivered up 'all the silver in the house of Jehovah and in the treasuries of the king's house' to Sargon (2 Kings xviii. 15). Why did not Isaiah rather foretell this nearer and more personal chastisement? By postponing Hezekiah's penalty so long, did he not run the risk of shaking the king's faith in his prophetic mission? And how could he have allowed Hezekiah to repose on the thought that 'peace and steadfastness (or, stability) should be in his days,' when so severe a trial as Sennacherib's invasion was reserved for his old age?—I conclude, therefore, (while fully recognising the complexity of the problem,) that the later editor has given his own colouring (comp. on xxxvii. 20) to the vague tradition which he may have received of Isaiah's prophetic condemnation of Hezekiah's intercourse with Merodach Baladan. If any reader feels disappointed at this result (which implies that the Jews had not yet discerned the full severity of the law of truthfulness), it may be some compensation to him that the ancient editor shows by this fictitious (or nearly fictitious) prophecy that he fully believed chaps. xl.–lxvi. to be the work of the great Isaiah. For he would never have given this 'colouring' which I have spoken of to Isaiah's reproof of Hezekiah without some real or supposed ground. This ground was the existence of a series of prophetic discourses from the pen, as he believed, of Isaiah, and intended for the Jewish exiles in Babylon. If Isaiah wrote those discourses which presuppose the Captivity, he surely must at some time or other have predicted the captivity (criticism of

those who know anything of the cuneiform method of writing) for the capital of the Assyrian empire. 'So,' he remarks, 'the Euphrates, not the Tigris, is the river which is to overflow the land of Immanuel (vii. 20, viii. 7, 8); . . . Babylon, not Nineveh, supplies the forces which besiege Tyre (xxiii. 13); and, to those who are content to take the text as it is, I may further quote the denunciations of Babylon in chap. xxi. and the latter half of the book' (*Jewish History and Politics*, p. 168). But as to the first set of passages, the Euphrates is there taken as a symbol of the Assyrian empire (which, under Tiglath Pileser, included Babylonia), because it would have been unnatural to speak of a more northerly river as overflowing into Judah. As to xxiii. 13 (see my note), it is a mistake to suppose that the Kasdim are pointed to as the destroyers of Tyre; as to xxi. 1–10, it is the independent kingdom of Merodach Baladan, the ruin of which is announced (see pp. 120, 121); and as to the latter half of the book, Sir E. Strachey stands alone in thinking (if he seriously does so) that the real or assumed standing-ground of the prophet is any other than the Babylonian captivity.

in the palace of the king of Babylon. [8] And Hezekiah said unto Isaiah, Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken. And he said, [d] For peace and steadfastness [d] will remain in my days.

[d] 2 Kings xx. 19 reads, Surely [I may be content], if peace and steadfastness . . . .

this elementary is, I believe, by no means so modern as some suppose). What opportunity so fit or natural as the reproof which, according (perhaps) to tradition, he actually addressed to Hezekiah for that unstable monarch's coquetry with the Babylonian power?

[7] **And of thy sons who shall issue from thee**] It has been questioned whether this means the immediate offspring of Hezekiah, or, more widely, his descendants. Comp. xxxviii. 5, 'David thy father;' and Gen. xvii. 6, 'kings shall issue from thee.' In the latter case, the phrase will refer to the descendants of the king who should be alive at the Babylonish captivity (comp. Dan. i. 3, 4). This explanation seems to me by far the more probable. It is favoured at once by the form of the phrase ('of thy sons,' implying that there was a considerable number), and by Hezekiah's expression of confidence in the next verse that the prophecy would not be fulfilled in his lifetime:—he could not be sure of this, if the prophecy referred to his immediate offspring.[1]

[8] **Good is the word . . . in my days**] The Syriac version connects the two sayings of Hezekiah directly, omitting 'and he said': 'Good is the word of Jehovah which thou hast spoken, that there shall be, &c.'; and this is at any rate the sense of the second saying. Hezekiah not only acquiesces in the will of Jehovah, like Eli (1 Sam. iii. 18), but congratulates himself on his own personal safety. It would no doubt have been the nobler course to cry, 'Me, me, adsum qui feci,[2]' and to beg that he alone might bear the punishment, as he alone had sinned. But the principle of the solidarity of the forefather and his posterity, and of the king and his people, prevails almost throughout the Old Testament:—in Jer. xxxi. 29, 30, and Ezek. xviii. we have apparently the first revelation of a higher law of morality. From the point of view which the narrator rightly ascribes to Hezekiah, that king could not well speak otherwise than he did (unless we assume a suspension of the laws of psychology). Even from a higher standing-ground we must admit that he fails, not by what he says, but by what he omits to say. For it *was* a great mercy that at least a respite was granted both to the kings and to the people of Judah. 'Steadfastness,' i.e., continuance. There is the same combination of words, with the same sense, in Jer. xiv. 13; comp. also Isa. xxxiii. 6. 'In my days,' i.e., as long as I live, comp. Ps. cxvi. 2 (Kay).

[1] So Hitzig, with his usual acuteness.

[2] It is tempting to quote the fine saying of David, 'Lo, *I* have sinned, and *I* have done perversely; but these sheep, what have they done?' (2 Sam xxiv. 17.) But unfortunately he continues, 'Let thine hand, I pray, be against me *and against my father's house*.'

CHAPTERS XL–LXVI.

We have now arrived at the most trying and yet most fascinating part of our subject—the interpretation of the last twenty-seven chapters. Sad it is that, from the only admissible point of view—the philological, the problem of their date and literary origin still remains unsettled, for until we know under what circumstances a prophecy was written, portions at least of the exegesis cannot but remain vague and obscure. Even the arrangement of the book (if it may accurately be called a book) is by no means as clear as we could wish. On both these points I will at least indicate what I conceive to be the present state of the questions later, reserving a more complete discussion for a subsequent work. In the following commentary I shall leave it an open question whether the book was composed by Isaiah or by some other author or authors, and whether it falls into two, three, or more parts, but not whether it is in the fullest sense of the word prophetic. I hold, with Dr. Franz Delitzsch, that 'if we only allow that the prophet really was a prophet, it is of no essential consequence to what age he belonged'[1]; and that the prophetic horizon of these chapters is not limited by the Exile, but extends to the advent of the historical Christ, and even beyond. I wish I could proceed with the same influential critic to make the further admission that the standing-ground of the author throughout his book is the latter part of the Babylonian Captivity, and that 'he is entirely carried away from his own times, and leads a pneumatic life [a life in the spirit] among the exiles.' If this were only correct, it would greatly simplify the task of exegesis. *Adhuc sub judice lis est.* All that we can say is, that at least for a large part of these twenty-seven chapters it is generally admitted that the prophet writes as if he were living among the exiles at Babylon, 'when the victories gained by Cyrus over the Medes and Lydians had begun to excite the apprehensions of the Jewish patriots,'[2] and where this is not so clearly the case the reader will find it candidly stated in the notes.

The Book of Isaiah Chronologically Arranged contains a tolerably full sketch of the line of thought, so far as it can be traced, throughout the prophecy. It will be noticed that the exegesis in the present work differs considerably from that in the former; I have had, however, more to develope (in a Christian sense) and to supplement than to retract. With regard to the arrangement of the book, I cannot see my way to adopt any of the current redistributions of the prophecies. Occasionally, no doubt, the chapters in our Bibles are

[1] *Biblical Commentary on the Prophecies of Isaiah*, ii. 138.
[2] *l. c. A.*, p. 141.

evidently misdivided, and here I have carefully noted the fact. But in the main I have accepted the existing arrangement, without comment or criticism. Some division of the book was necessary; and, in default of scientific accuracy, practical convenience seemed the first consideration.

Let us now approach with sympathetic minds this Gospel before the Gospel. Though written primarily for the exiles at Babylon, its scope is as wide as that of any part of the New Testament, and New Testament qualifications are required alike in the interpreter and in his readers.

CHAPTER XL.

Contents.—The prophet describes his commission (*vv.* 1–11); declares the infinite perfections of Jehovah, and rebukes the stupidity of idolaters, and the weak faith of Jehovah's worshippers (*vv.* 12-31).

[1] Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. [2] Speak ye to the heart of Jerusalem, and call unto her, that her warfare is fulfilled, that her guilt is paid off, that she hath received

[1] **Comfort ye, comfort ye**] The theme, not only of chap. xl., but of the whole prophecy which this chapter introduces; comp. xxxv. 3, 4, lxi. 2. The persons addressed are the prophets (as the Targ. already states at *v.* 1), not the priests (as Sept. interpolates in *v.* 2), for the next verse continues 'Call ye' (see below). The prophets formed a numerous body, not only in Isaiah's time (iii. 1, xxix. 10, 20), but in the Babylonian exile (Jer. xxix. 1).——**My people**] No longer 'Not-my-people' (Hos. i. 9), no longer 'this people' (see on vi. 9) —both phrases implying Jehovah's temporary rejection of Israel; but again 'My people.'

[2] **Speak ye to the heart . . . and call**] A single, concise declaration of God's loving will was not enough. The prophets are therefore told more distinctly still both what they are to speak and how. Their message is to be delivered encouragingly ('to the heart') and with a full clear note ('call'). The former phrase reminds us especially of Hos. ii. 16 (A. V. 14). 'To call' is a synonym for 'to prophesy'; so in the Hebr. of lviii. 1, lxi. 1, 2, Zech. i. 14, Jon. iii. 2. Mohammed, in the Korán, constantly uses the corresponding Arabic word in a similar way; e.g. 'Call thou, in the name of thy Lord who created' (Sura xcvi. 1). The prophetic announcement falls into three parallel statements.——**Her warfare**] i.e., her enforced hardships (there is a similar use of *guerra* in Dante and Petrarca). The metaphor is very suggestive of the peculiar troubles of military service in ancient times; comp. the humorous Egyptian description given by M. Lenormant, *Ancient History of the East*, i. 315.—Notice here the first of a series of parallels between II. Isaiah and Job; see Job vii. 1, 'Hath not man a warfare (i.e. a hard service) upon earth'—in Job xiv. 14 the phrase has a rather different application. ——**Her guilt**] i.e., the penalty of her guilt.——**Is paid off**] Lit. is satisfied. The sense is determined by Lev. xxvi. 41, 43, comp. 34 (*Q. P. B.*). See note on li. 21.——**That she hath received**] This is the historic perfect, as is clearly shown by the parallelism. The view of Ges., Hitz., Ew., that it is a

of the hand of Jehovah double for all her sins. [3] Hark! one that calleth: 'In the wilderness clear ye Jehovah's way, make

prophetic perfect, and stands for 'she shall receive,' is bound up with a wrong interpretation of the closing words of the verse.—— **Double for all her sins**] It has been said that this is a rhetorical hyperbole, designed to set the compassionate love of God in the clearest light, that God condescends to accuse Himself, as if He had been too severe. Others, objecting to this 'as if,' illustrate by the prophetic passages which assert an over-severity on the part of the heathen rulers of Israel (see xlvii. 6, Jer. l. 7, 11, 17, Zech. i. 15). It is simpler, however, to take 'double' in the sense of 'amply sufficient;' comp. Jer. xvii. 18, 'Ruin them with double ruin,' Rev. xviii. 6, 'Double unto her double according to her works.' —Ges., Hitz., Ew., would render 'double (compensation) for all her penalties,' referring for the rendering 'penalties' to v. 18 (where, however, such a meaning is improbable), and Zech. xiv. 19, and for the idea to lxi. 7, Jer. xvi. 14–18?, Zech. ix. 12, comp. Job xlii. 12. But this is not favoured by the plural, and is opposed by the context (see last note).

[3] Here begins a triad of invitations, each containing three verses (*vv.* 3–5, 6–8, 9–11). —— **Hark! one that calleth**] The second message relates to something to be done for Jehovah; it is therefore naturally ascribed to a non-divine though still supernatural voice. The poetic effect is much heightened by the mystery. Comp. li. 9, lii. 1, lvii. 14, lxii. 10. Similar voices are spoken of in the Book of Revelation (Rev. i. 10, 12, iv. 1, x. 4, 8), and are to be explained on these analogies.——**In the wilderness**] Not to be joined with 'one crieth' (as Sept., Vulg., and the Synoptic Gospels), for this would spoil the parallelism of the next line. The accents, too, are against this conjunction. ——**Clear ye** . . . An allusion to the well-known practice of eastern monarchs on their progresses (see Bishop Lowth). In the Synoptic Gospels (Matt. iii. 3, Mark i. 3, Luke iii. 4) the passage is taken metaphorically of the preparation of the heart (cf. Ps. lxxxiv. 5, 'highways in their heart'), and so it must perforce be taken, if the command is addressed, as in *vv.* 1, 2, to the prophets. The parallel passages xlix. 11, lvii. 14, lxii. 10, cf. xxxv. 8, are, however, opposed to this view, and prove that we have here a grand poetic symbol, introduced to heighten the effect, and impress the reader with the greatness of the event. The pioneers, then, are (not the tribes of the wilderness, as Knobel thinks, but) supernatural, angelic beings. In xxxv. 8 no pioneers are mentioned:—the highway for the redeemed is one 'not made with hands.'——**In the desert**] It is true, the ordinary way from Babylon to Jerusalem, by Damascus, Palmyra, Thapsacus, for the most part went round, and not through, the desert. It is the importunity of faith which insists on going the nearest way, in defiance of all obstacles. There seems to be also an allusion to the journey through the desert at the Exodus, Egypt being typical of Babylon; see xlviii. 21, lii. 12, cf. xi. 16.—Del. sees an allusion to our passage in Ps. lxviii. 4 (5).—— **Jehovah's way**] The return of Jehovah to Palestine is a compendious expression for the restoration of the exiles and for the renewal of all the spiritual privileges of which the Jews had been deprived. That this is the case is shown by lxii. 10, 11, in which, side by side, we have the command to make a road for 'the people' (i.e., the Jewish exiles), and a promise word for word the same as xl. 10*b*. So too, in lii. 8 we have the return of Jehovah mentioned alone, and directly

plain in the desert a highway for our God. 4 Let every valley be exalted, and every mountain and hill be brought low, and let that which is rugged become a table-land, and the ridges a highland plain; 5 and then shall reveal itself the glory of Jehovah, and all flesh together shall see it: for the mouth of Jehovah hath spoken it.' 6 Hark! one that saith 'Call.' And [a]one said,[a] 'What shall I call?' 'All flesh is grass, and all

[a] I said, Sept., Vulg., Geiger.

afterwards (*v.* 12) the return of the hosts of Israel under the generalship of Jehovah. There is therefore no reason to infer with Seinecke from passages like xl. 3–10 that Isa. xl.–lxvi. was written for those Jews who were left behind by Nebuchadnezzar in Palestine.

5 **All flesh shall see it**] Comp. Ps. xcvii. 6. The 'seeing' is twofold, as appears from the sequel (see chap. lx.). It is (1) the natural sight of Jehovah's glorious deeds on behalf of his people, and (2) the spiritual recognition of Jehovah as the Lord. It is possible for Jehovah's Arm to 'reveal itself' and yet for the spiritual eye to be closed to it; see liii. 1 (same word).

6 **And one said**] viz., the prophet, rapt by a vision out of his ordinary self (comp. xxi. 6–9, 11, 12, 2 Cor. xii. 2–4). Throughout his discourses, the self-effacement of the inspired author is very remarkable (comp. on xlviii. 16 *b*).——**All flesh is grass**] It is doubtful whether this and the next verse (or even the next two verses) belong to the questioner, or to the voice which said, 'Call.' In the former case, the preceding question is one of despondency, and 'All flesh is grass' gives the reason of this despondency:—'How can "all flesh" be destined to see such a glorious sight (*v.* 5), when it is subject to the law of decay and death?' To this implied question, *v.* 8 may be regarded as the answer. (So Kay, who improves the sense by taking 'the people' in *v.* 7 to mean Israel.) This view is surely unnatural. We cannot dispense with some fresh tidings for the herald, and the separation of *v.* 8 from *v.* 7 is against the style of the Book of Isaiah, in both parts of which repetition of a phrase with a slight addition or modification is a favourite oratorical turn (see Delitzsch, *Isaiah*, E. T., ii. 134). I therefore adhere to the ordinary view, which regards *vv.* 6*b*–8 as the answer of 'the Voice,' who draws an antithesis between the decay—it may be, the premature decay (for the breath of Jehovah 'bloweth' *when* 'it listeth')—to which even the brightest and best of earthly things are liable, and the necessary permanence of Jehovah and his revelation.—This is the first time that the phrase 'all flesh' occurs in the Book of Isaiah; we meet with it again in xlix. 26, lxvi. 16, 23, 24, also four times in Jeremiah, thrice in Ezekiel, once in Zechariah (ii. 17), also repeatedly in the Pentateuch, and it would be well worth while to examine the Pentateuch-sections in which it occurs with a view to illustrating their date. Jeremiah and Deuteronomy (v. 23 Hebr.) are the only pre-exile books of absolutely certain date in which the phrase is found. It would, however, naturally be employed in dealing with subjects of universal, as opposed to merely Jewish, interest; so that the question for decision is, Was the present subject (whether it be the Flood, or the fall of the world-empires), a natural subject for any particular inspired writer to take up at the time to which he is commonly referred?—Dr. Weir makes the suggestive remark that

the grace thereof like flowers of the field. [7] [b] Dry is the grass, faded are the flowers, if the breath of Jehovah hath blown thereon; surely the people is grass.[b] [8] Dry is the grass, faded are the flowers, but the word of our God shall stand for ever.'

[9] Get thee up on a high mountain, [c] O Zion, thou bringer of good tidings[c]; lift up mightily thy voice, O Jerusalem, thou bringer of good tidings; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold, your God! [10] Behold, the Lord Jehovah, [d] as a strong one[d] will he come, his Arm ruling

[b] The whole verse is omitted in Sept.; the last clause only, by Koppe, Ges. (doubtfully), Hitz., as a gloss. Comp. on ii. 22.

[c] O company that bringest good tidings to Zion, Sept., Targ., Vulg. (?), Rashi, Ges., Kay.

[d] With strength, Sept., Pesh., Targ., Vulg., Ges.

the sentence 'All flesh is grass' is 'quite in the spirit of ii. 22' ('man in whose nostrils is a breath'). Unfortunately this does not greatly confirm the Isaianic origin of the passage before us, for the authorship of ii. 22 is open to grave doubt (see my note *ad loc.*).—It would be impossible within reasonable limits to treat every linguistic phenomenon even briefly, but it seemed right thus to draw the reader's attention to the important bearing which a single word, or group of words, may have on the literary problems of the Bible.——**The grace thereof**] The word (*khésed*) nowhere else has this meaning, but its synonym (*khēn*) has the double sense of favour and grace or gracefulness.

[7] **Surely the people is grass**] The statement is resumptive. 'Surely the human folk (comp. xlii. 5, xliv. 7) is as perishable as grass (comp. Ps. xc. 5, 6). Israel and Assyria are both politically extinct, and Babylon is hurrying to its end.' The thought is suggested, though not expressed, that if Israel is to rise again from its ashes, it can only be by abstaining from all attempts at secular aggrandisement. The new Israel will be in all the circumstances of its growth supernatural. Others (Kay, Seinecke, Oort, Naegelsbach) make 'the people' = Israel, but this limitation hardly suits the context, which refers to 'all flesh.'

[8] **The word . . . shall stand**] i.e., specially the promise or prophecy concerning Israel, comp. xliv. 26, xlv. 19, lii. 6, lxiii. 1, Jer. xliv. 28, 29, of which all mankind shall experience the saving fruits.

[9] Here the prophet is transported mentally to Palestine and to the time immediately before the fulfilment of the promise. He calls upon Jerusalem to announce to her 'daughter'-cities (cf. Ezek. xvi. 46–48) the glad tidings of the approach of their God. By Jerusalem he means not merely the phenomenal or actual Jerusalem in its state of desolation, but the ideal Jerusalem, which has walls and watchmen (lii. 8, 9, cf. xlix. 16), for it is in the supersensible world, 'graven on the palms of [Jehovah's] hands' (xlix. 16). The ideal Jerusalem, in this prophecy, corresponds to the ideal Israel, though sometimes (e.g., lii. 1, 2) the two conceptions—the ideal and the phenomenal—are almost merged in one. See further xlix. 14–19, lxii. 6, and comp. Rev. xxi. 10 ('the city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God'). The passage of the apocryphal Book of Baruch, quoted in my note on xlix. 16, may also fitly be compared in this connection. (Alt. rend. is less poetical; see however Kay's note).

[10] **His Arm**] This is not merely figurative (as in xxx. 30), but one of the many symbolic expressions for

for him; behold, his wage is with him, and his recompence before him. [11] As a shepherd will he feed his flock; in his arm will he gather the lambs, and in his bosom carry them, those which give suck will he lead.

[12] Who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and regulated the heavens with a span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a tierce, and weighed the mountains in

the manifestation of the Deity—touching monuments of a childlike faith. Analogous phrases are 'the Face of Jehovah' (note on i. 12), his 'Name' (note on xxx. 27), his 'sword' (xxvii. 1, xxxiv. 5), and his 'Hand' (viii. 11, lix. 1). 'Arm of Jehovah' more especially embodies the attribute of Almightiness. In this symbolic sense it occurs only in II. Isaiah (xl. 10, li. 5, 9, lii. 10, liii. 1, lix. 16, lxiii. 5, 12).——**Ruling for him**] i.e., in his interest, Israel being 'formed for Jehovah' (xliii. 21), or, in the language of the Vulgate (Ex. xix. 5), his *peculium*. Comp. lix. 16, Ps. xcviii. 1 (a psalm deeply influenced by II. Isaiah).——**His wage . . . his recompence**] The reward which he gives to his faithful ones (see xlix. 4, lxiii. 7, 8), perhaps with the collateral meaning of retribution to his enemies (so 'recompence,' lxv. 7).

[11] At first sight it appears as if there were here a sudden transition. Were it really so, the effect would be most thrilling. But this verse is in fact closely connected with the preceding one; it describes the reward of which we have just been told.——**Will he feed his flock**] The Israelites were the flock of Jehovah (Ps. lxxvii. 20, lxxx. 1), but during the Captivity a scattered and miserable flock. Jeremiah says that his eye 'shall run down with tears, because the flock of Jehovah is carried away captive' (Jer. xiii. 17). The change in the fortunes of the Jews is compared by the prophets to a shepherd's seeking his lost sheep, and finding them again in green pastures, Jer. xxxi. 10, l. 19, Ezek. xxxiv. 11–16. The reference is not so much to the homeward journey of the exiles as to the state of temporal and spiritual happiness in which they would find themselves on their return. The same figures occur in a psalm, where a reference to the return from exile is excluded by the pre-exile date, '. . . feed them also, and carry them for ever' (Ps. xxviii. 9).——**Will he lead**] Comp. Gen. xxxiii. 13, 'If men should overdrive them (i.e., those which give suck) one day, all the flock will die.'

[12] The homily which begins here is addressed to the phenomenal or actual Israel, many of whose members were in danger from a subtle combination of the forces of unbelief within and polytheism without. It seemed as if Jehovah had forgotten his people, and as unsophisticated man cannot dispense with a Divine patron, many Jews were on the point of (literally) falling into idolatry. The Book of Job here, as so often, supplies us with a parallel. Job indeed was not tempted to polytheism; if he had broken away entirely from Jehovah, he would have stood alone, like Dante's Capaneo and Milton's Satan. But his spiritual trials were similar to those of the Jews; his confidence in the justice of Eloah (as a non-Israelite he does not use the name Jehovah) was thoroughly shaken. The true God condescends to meet Job personally. He addresses him in a speech entirely made up of questions full of a 'divine irony,' the second of which reminds us strongly of the speech of Jehovah in our prophecy. It runs thus, 'Who set its (the earth's) measures, if thou knowest? or who stretched

scales, and the hills in a balance? [13]Who [e]hath regulated[e] the Spirit of Jehovah, and being his counsellor informed him? [14]With whom hath he taken counsel, that he might instruct him, and teach him as to the path of right, and teach him knowledge, and inform him of the way of perfect discretion? [15]Behold, nations are accounted as a drop on a bucket, and as fine dust on a balance; behold, he lifteth up [f]countries as a

[e] Hath directed, Targ., Pesh., A. V., Vitr. Hath known, Sept., (Dr. Weir thinks this a different reading, comp. *v.* 21, in the Hebr. and the Greek; but it may be simply a paraphrase. The Hebr. may also mean 'hath weighed' (as Prov. xvi. 2), and hence 'hath tested,' or 'obtained accurate knowledge of.')

[f] So Hitz., always (except xi. 11), and generally Ges.—Islands, Ancient Versions, Lowth (here only, see below), Del., Naeg.—Coasts, Ew.

out a line upon it?' (Job xxxviii. 5). The answer in Job, in a parallel passage in Proverbs, and in II. Isaiah, is the same, 'Who but Jehovah?' (Ges., Kay, Naeg. suppose the answer in our prophecy to be 'No *man*,' which *seems* to be confirmed by *vv.* 13, 14; see, however, the next note.) Some, e.g. Naeg., have taken offence at the implied ascription of a 'hollow of the hand,' a 'span,' and a 'tierce' to Jehovah; but prophecy regards earthly things as types and shadows of the heavenly. Jehovah has an Arm in this very chapter (*v.* 10), 'hands' in xlix. 16, a 'seah,' or a 'double seah,' in xxvii. 8, and in Ps. lxxx. 5 a 'tierce.'—A **tierce** is (as the Hebr. word *shâlîsh* implies) the third part of some larger measure (probably of an ephah):—it was a very small measure for creation, observes Del. (see Ps. *loc. cit.*), but a large one for tears. Obs., the conception of the orderliness of creation took almost as firm a hold of the Hebrew mind as the Greek. Hence the Greek writer of Wisdom need not be credited with Alexandrinism when he writes (xi. 20), 'Thou hast ordered all things by measure and number and weight.' The same idea of the minuteness of God's creative arrangements is expressed by our prophet metaphorically.

[13] Another question, equally ironical with the former. The correctness of the reading 'regulated' is slightly doubtful, but the repetition of the verb from *v.* 12 may perhaps have a special significance. The speaker, as I understand the passage, professes to sympathise with one of the theological difficulties of the Jews, and treats it for a moment as an open question. It is this:—Jehovah, and he alone, 'regulated' or fixed the proportions of heaven and earth, but **who hath regulated the Spirit of Jehovah**? Was this almighty Demiurge himself absolutely free? May not even Omnipotence be subject to conditions? May there not be an equal or superior power, whose counsel must be deferred to even by Jehovah? The **Spirit of Jehovah** is the life-giving principle in the Deity, and is especially mentioned in connection with creation (Gen. i. 2, Ps. civ. 30, Job xxxiii. 4). In II. Isaiah there is a marked tendency to hypostatise the Spirit; here, for instance, consciousness and intelligence are distinctly predicated of the Spirit (see further on lxiii. 10).

[14] **With whom hath he taken counsel**] Contrast the Babylonian myth of a joint action of Bel and the gods in the creation of man, and the Iranian of a co-creatorship of Ormuzd and the Amshaspands (*Vendidad*, xix. 34). But there is no direct reference to either of these myths. In fact, neither Babylonians nor Persians had fixed cosmogonies.

[15] **Behold**] To prepare the reader for a new and pregnant instance of

straw. [16] (And Lebanon is not sufficient for burning, nor its beasts sufficient for burnt offerings). [17] All the nations are as nothing before him; as of nought and (as) Chaos they are accounted of him. [18] To what then can ye liken God? and what similitude can ye place beside him?

[19] The image—a craftsman casteth it, and a goldsmith overlayeth it with gold, and forgeth (for it) chains of silver.

Jehovah's might. From nature we pass to history.——**Countries**] Literally 'habitable lands.' The word occurs three times in the singular in the first part of Isaiah, thirteen times in the plural in the second part (including xxiv. 15), and once in the first (xi. 11). In usage it is generally applied to the distant countries of the West, though in Ezek. xxvii. 15 it may include India. Bp. Lowth goes so far as to render it generally in II. Isaiah, 'distant countries,' and distance is certainly implied in xli. 5, xlix. 1, lx. 9, lxvi. 19. This is at any rate better than 'islands' or 'sea-coasts,' seeing that in II. Isaiah it is generally parallel to 'nations.' 'The frequency with which this word occurs is very remarkable as indicating the wide range of thought which distinguishes this prophecy' (Weir.)

[16] An inference from *v.* 16. Jehovah being so far greater than man, how can any sacrificial rites be worthy of Him? Judah no doubt was poor in wood,[1] but even Lebanon, were it in the hands of Jehovah's worshippers, would not yield wood enough to do Him honour.

[17] **Of nought**] The preposition is partitive. '*Nought* is regarded as a great concrete object, of which the nations are a part' (Hitzig.) They belong to the category of nothingness. Same idiom in xli. 24, xliv. 11, Ps. lxii. 10.——**Chaos**] Hebr. *tōhū*, one of the two words (*tōhū va-bōhū*) used together in Gen. i. 2, to signify the formless waste of chaos. It is the strongest expression in the language for lifelessness, futility, and desolation, and occurs eight times in II. Isaiah (besides xxiv. 10, xxxiv. 11), once only in I. Isaiah (xxix. 21).

Vv. 19-20. The answer to the question with which the last paragraph ended is furnished by describing how the idols, first of the rich, and then of the poor, are manufactured. The prophet's tone is sarcastic. While monotheism was still struggling for existence, it was impossible to seek a common ground with polytheists, like St. Paul at the Areopagus, or with cool deliberate hand to mete out justice to the original intention of idolatries. The preacher of monotheism to a wavering and uncertain people must be instant 'in season and out of season.' A whole series of ironical descriptions, of which this is the first, remains to attest the prophet's earnestness. See xli. 7, xliv. 9–17, xlvi. 6, and comp. Hab. ii. 18, Jer. x. 19, 3, 4, Ps. cxv. 4–7, cxxxv. 15–18.—We are not told whether the manufacturers of idols were themselves Israelites.

[19] **The image**] This is put first for emphasis. Surely ye will not compare such an object as this to Jehovah?——**Chains**] To fasten the idol to the wall.

[1] The smallness of the Judæan territory obliged Nehemiah to appoint special officers for the collection of wood for the sacrifices (Neh. x. 34).

20 [g] He that is impoverished in offerings[g] chooseth a wood that
decayeth not, seeketh unto him a skilful craftsman to set up
an image that tottereth not. 21 Can ye not perceive? can
ye not hear? hath it not been announced unto you from the
beginning? have ye not understood [h] from the foundations[h] of
the earth? 22 He who sitteth above the circle of the earth, (and
its inhabitants are as locusts;) who stretched out the heavens
as fine cloth, and spread them out as a habitable tent. 23 He

[g] So the text literally. He that is poor (chooseth) for an offering, Drechsler.—He that is experienced in offerings, Rashi (substantially), Luzzatto (altering the points).
[h] So Hebr. accents, Kimchi, Calv., Ew., Henderson, Weir.—The foundations, Sept., Pesh., Vulg., Ges., Hitz., Del., Kay, Naeg.—Targ. has, To fear before him who created the foundations, &c. See crit. note.

20 The transition to *v.* 20 is so abrupt that I cannot help conjecturing that something has dropped out of the first part of the description.

20 **He that is impoverished in offerings**] Most commentators, since Kimchi, explain this, 'He that is unable by reason of his poverty to dedicate a costly image to his god.' But surely this puts great violence on the text; some error must have crept in.—The word rendered 'offerings' is *t'rūmah* 'a lifting up,' sometimes rendered in A. V. of the Pentateuch, 'a heave-offering,' but which, in Ezekiel at any rate (see Ezek. xlv. 1, xlviii. 8, 12, 20, xlv. 13), also in Ex. xxv. 2 (and parallel passages), Ezra viii. 25, and here, must mean simply an offering, i.e., as Sept. understands it, something taken away (comp. use of verb in lvii. 14, Ezek. xxi. 31, Dan. viii. 11) from a larger mass, and set apart for God.

21 An indignant double question (as *v.* 28).——**Can ye not hear?**] He means an inner hearing, the 'hearing heart,' of which Solomon speaks (1 Kings iii. 9).——**From the beginning . . . from the foundations of the earth**] In the beginning 'He founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods' (Ps. xxiv. 2), and ever since 'day unto day keeps pouring out speech, and night unto night declaring knowledge' (Ps. xix. 2). 'For from the creation of the world His invisible (attributes) are perceived, being understood by means of His works' (Rom. i. 20). Alt. rend. (see note [g]), injures the parallelism, and is rather less natural, as it requires us to take 'foundations' = 'origin,' or else metaphorically = 'the will and word of God.'

23 The participial clauses are to be taken as admiring exclamations, out of logical connection. No subject and no verb are necessary. There can be but One of whom these predicates are true, and the thought of Him who maketh and preserveth all things fills the prophet's mind.——**The circle of the earth**] i.e., overarching the earth, Job xxii. 14, Prov. viii. 27.——**As locusts**] 'There we saw the giants . . . and we were in our own eyes as locusts' (Num. xiii. 33).——**Stretched out the heavens**] A characteristic phrase of II. Isaiah (see also xlii. 5, xliv. 24, xlv. 12, li. 13), found in Job (ix. 8), Zechariah (xii. 1), and one of the later Psalms (Ps. civ. 2). A presumption, which however derives its main force from other corroborating circumstances, arises that these books, or parts of books, are not so widely separated in time as some suppose.——**As fine cloth**] A natural comparison to the childlike Semitic nations. The Babylonians said that the heaven was extended over the earth 'like a coverlet' (Lenormant, *La magie chez les Chaldéens*, 1st ed., p. 142).

who bringeth men of weight to nothing, who maketh the judges of the earth as Chaos: [24] (1 yea, they were never planted; yea, they were never sown; yea, their stock never took root in the earth: and moreover[1] he bloweth upon them and they dry up, and like stubble a tempest carrieth them away.) [25] To whom then will ye liken me, that I may be equal to him? saith the Holy One. [26] Lift up your eyes on high, and see. Who hath created these? He who bringeth out their host in [their full] number, (he calleth them all by name) through

[1] Scarcely . . . scarcely . . . scarcely . . . when; Vitr., Ges., Hitz., Ew., Del., Naeg. (in his note, but not in his translation).

—*Dōq* = 'fine cloth'; *daq* = 'fine dust' (*v.* 15).

[23, 24] A picture of the revolutions at all times common in the East, with a side-reference to the fall of Babylon. Parallel passage, Job xii. 17–21.

[24] **Yea, they were never planted**] To a common eye, Nineveh and Babylon seemed planted for eternity, firmly rooted in the soil, but to the prophets, regarding them from the point of view of the future, they seemed as though they had never been. 'If He destroy him from his place,' says Bildad, 'it will deny him, (saying,) I have never seen thee' (Job viii. 18). So Ibn Ezra, Luzzatto, Kay. The difficulty, on this theory of the meaning, is in connecting the first half of the verse with the second. The truth perhaps is that *there is no logical connection*. The prophet first exclaims, They never can have been really planted; then—another form of expressing the same thought, They were planted indeed, but He blew upon them, and all was over. According to the first view, their story was a comedy; according to the second, a tragic reality.—The common rend. is rather a paraphrase, and obliges us to deviate unwarrantably from the letter of the original. 'They were not planted' is a negative statement; 'they were scarcely planted' involves the positive affirmation that they were (though only just) planted.

[25] **The Holy One**] The Hebr. (*Qādōsh*) is without the article, and without the defining words 'of Israel,' which we always find elsewhere, except lvii. 15, Job vi. 10, Hab. iii. 3, Ps. xxii. 3 (4).

[26] A third time the prophet takes up the theme of the uniqueness of Jehovah.——**Who hath created**] Here we have the first occurrence of the verb *bārā* 'to create':—it is found in II. Isaiah no less than twenty times (once in I. Isaiah, viz., iv. 5, and once in Amos iv. 13), another proof of the 'wide range of thought' in this prophecy (see on *v.* 15).——**These**] i.e., these (= yonder) heavens.——**He who bringeth out their host**] This is not the answer to the foregoing question, which in fact, to the prophet, answers itself. The participle is to be explained like those in *vv.* 22, 23. 'Bringeth out,' i.e., into the field; it is a military term, comp. 2 Sam. v. 2, xi. 1 (Hitz.). The 'host' are the stars, which are described as called over, like soldiers at the roll-call; comp. the imitation in Ps. cxlvii. 4, 5:

He counteth the number of the stars,
Calleth them all by (their) names.
Great is our Lord, and abounding in might,
Of his understanding there is no number (i.e. calculation).

According to the Bundehesh (chap. v.), the stars form a host divided into several parts, and ranged under leaders (Spiegel, *Avesta*, vol. iii. p. xxxi.).——**By name**] i.e., by their names. Dr. Weir quotes

abounding might and being firm of strength; not one is missing.

[27] Why sayest thou, O Jacob, and speakest, O Israel, My way is hidden from Jehovah, and my right hath been let slip by my God? [28] Hast thou not perceived? hast thou not heard? An everlasting God is Jehovah, creator of the ends of the earth; he fainteth not, neither is he weary; there is no searching of his understanding; [29] who giveth to the weary force, and unto the powerless maketh strength to abound: [30] and should the youths faint and be weary, and should the young men stumble, [31] yet Jehovah's waiting ones shall gather fresh force, they shall [k] put forth [k] pinions as the eagles; they shall run and not weary, they shall go on and not faint.

[k] Lift up (their), Ges., Del.

John x. 3, 'He calleth his own sheep by name.'

[27] Here the prophet turns to the despondent yet not unbelieving kernel of the nation. Those who form it complain that they are utterly forsaken by 'their God' (he is still *their* God), that their 'way' (the irksome condition of exile) is hidden from his view (comp. lxv. 16), and that their 'right' (i.e., their lost independence) passes unnoticed by him. Similar complaints betokening a weakness of faith in God's providence occur in xlix. 14, Job xxvii. 2.

[28] The prophet's reply. Note the accumulation of Divine titles —'so many shields against despair' (Hengstenberg).——**An everlasting God**] His covenant therefore is irreversible. The prophet had said as much in *v.* 8, but felt that it needed to be enforced. Perhaps, too, he alludes to the meaning of Jehovah. The idea of the Divine everlastingness is one of the primary notes of this prophecy.——**The ends of the earth**] i.e., the whole earth from end to end. Babylonia, then, the seat of the exile of the Jews, is not beyond Jehovah's empire, as if he were only 'the god of the hills' of Palestine.——**He fainteth not**] As some of the Jews seem to have imagined in their naïve, unspiritual view of God. Sept. renders 'he will not hunger,' and in fact the word sometimes means faintness from want of food, e.g., Judg. viii. 15. The Jews may have thought that Jehovah missed the fat of their sacrifices (comp. xliii. 24).——**There is no searching . . .**] Consequently he must have had good reason for delaying the redemption of his people. The all-wisdom of God is a favourite idea of Job, though the phrase here used only occurs in Job v. 9, ix. 10 (but comp. xxxiv. 24, xxxvi. 26); God's 'understanding' is spoken of in Job xii. 13, xxvi. 12. What strange contrasts there are in the religious views of members of the same nation! (see last note.)

[29] Comfort for the Jews in their depressed condition. They have only to 'wait for Jehovah,' i.e., to believe in him, to become younger and stronger than ever.

[30, 31] The form reminds us of Ps. xxxiv. 10 (11).——**They shall put forth. . .**] 'Thou shalt renew thy youth as the eagle,' says 'the oldest commentator on this passage,' himself a psalmist (Ps. ciii. 5). It is an allusion to the popular belief of the ancients that the eagle moults in his old age, and renews his feathers.

CHAPTER XLI.

Contents.—The Nations summoned to defend their idolatry by argument (*vv.* 1–4); the moral effect of the victories of Cyrus upon them described (*vv.* 5–7); a contrast between Israel's apparent weakness and real strength in Jehovah (*vv.* 8–20); the claim to foreknowledge of the idol-gods considered and dismissed.

[1] Come silently unto me, O countries, and let the peoples gather fresh force: let them approach, then let them speak; together let us draw near to judgment. [2] Who hath stirred up from the sun-rising (the man) whom Righteousness [a] calleth to follow him [a]; (and) giveth up before him peoples, and maketh him trample upon kings, maketh like dust [b] their sword, like driven stubble [b] their bow? [3] He pursueth them,

[a] Meeteth at every step, Ges., Ew., Del.
[b] So Sept., Ew.—His; text.

1-4 Jehovah is the speaker. The tribunal appealed to is that of reason, comp. v. 3; the question to be decided, Who has the best claim to be God, Jehovah or the idol-gods of the Gentiles?——**Countries**] See on xl. 15.——**Gather fresh force**] Same expression in xl. 31 of believers in the true God. Here it sounds rather strangely. Perhaps it is meant ironically, the 'force' of the idolaters being utter weakness, as, in *v.* 21, they are bidden to produce their 'bulwarks.'

2 The first argument for the divinity of Jehovah: the victorious career of Cyrus.——**Whom Righteousness calleth to follow him**] Cyrus is, to the prophet, the minister of God's righteousness, and God's righteousness means generally in the Old Testament His fidelity to covenant engagements, to His promises, and to His threatenings (see on xlii. 6). This close relation between Cyrus and Jehovah is one of the fundamental ideas of II. Isaiah Again and again we are told that this Persian king was called 'in righteousness' (xlii. 6, xlv. 13). It is only a slight variation to say (as the prophet does here) that Righteousness called Cyrus to follow him. So too in lviii. 8 we read that Israel's righteousness (i.e., the deliverance which is the fruit of God's righteousness) shall go before him; comp. also Ps. lxxxv. 13 (14). If any further justification of the above rendering be necessary, let it be xlv. 2, where the mention of Cyrus's successes is preceded by the words, 'I (Jehovah) will go before thee.' [I see that this is De Dieu's explanation, *Animadversiones in V. T.*, Lugd. Bat. 1648, pp. 532, 3. No other seems to me reconcileable with usage, at any rate so far as *l'raglō* is concerned, which always implies following; see e.g., Gen. xxx. 30, 1 Sam. xxv. 42, Hab. iii. 5—Deut. xxxiii. 3 is too obscure to be a valid instance to the contrary. So too, I see, thinks Dr. Weir, though he prefers rendering, 'whom he (God) calleth in righteousness to follow him.']——**Like dust their sword . . .**] i.e., incapable of even a passive resistance, comp. Job xli. 26–29 (A. V.). Alt. read. applies the figures to the rapidity of Cyrus's victories, for which comp. Lenormant, *Ancient History*, bk. v. ch. 5. It is, however, not a very natural rend. of the traditional reading, and Ew. rightly follows LXX. Dr. Weir too inclines to this view. Against

passeth on in safety; the road with his feet he [c]doth not[c] tread. [4]Who hath produced and carried out this? He that hath called forth the generations from the beginning; I Jehovah am the first, and with the last I am [d]He.

[5]The countries have seen it, and are afraid; the ends of

[c] So Ew., Kay.—Was not wont to, Ges., Del.—(Passeth on) by a road which one entereth not with one's feet (or, in which no one can follow him), Weir.
[d] The same, Ges.

the ancient reference (see Targ.) of this passage to the call of Abraham and the victory in Gen. xiv., Ibn Ezra, Vitr., and Dr. Kay have each well argued.

[3] **The road with his feet . . .**] Cyrus (with Righteousness as his guide, *v.* 2) penetrates safely through districts impervious to ordinary wayfarers—he goes where there is no road (comp. xlv. 2 *a*). The Assyrian kings, too, were accustomed to boast of the trackless paths which they had traversed (see on xxxvii. 24). This explanation will suit any of the above renderings. The version adopted will also bear another meaning, viz. that Cyrus passes along the road so quickly that his footsteps are as it were invisible. So in xlvi. 11 he is called an eagle or vulture; and so in Dan. viii. 5 (referred to by Ew.) the typical he-goat 'touched not the ground.'—Both the alt. rends. require us to take the last imperfect in a different sense from the preceding ones, and are therefore less natural than that in the text.—Dr. Weir's alt. rend. is also given by Hahn.

[4] **Who hath produced . . .**] Which of the supposed gods can have raised up this mighty conqueror? Surely not those gods whose worshippers he has come to overthrow? Who, but he who summoned into being the generations of the vanished past and of the vanishing present—he who preceded them all, and who will be still the same self-existent one in the ages to come? 'The first and with the last'; repeated with but slight difference in xliv. 6 (see note) and xlviii. 12. It is an unfolding of the sense attached by the prophets to the name Jehovah; comp. Mal. iii. 6.——**I am He**] 'He' is here used with emphasis almost as a title of God, as it is indeed in later Hebrew (in which 'I' is also thus used), and in the Korán. The statement, 'I am He,' predicates of Jehovah that he alone is lord and master (cf. *αὐτὸς* in *Αὐτὸς ἔφα*), and alone self-existent, though his nature be incapable of verbal definition. It occurs again in xliii. 10, 13, xlvi. 4, xlviii. 12, Deut. xxxii. 39, Ps. cii. 28 (comp. Rev. i. 11, &c.). The last passage deserves special attention, as the psalm in which it occurs is evidently written by one who deeply loved and studied II. Isaiah. It runs:—

But thou art He, and thy years will not come to an end.

Comp.

'The nameless He whose nod is Nature's birth.'
(Young's *Night Thoughts*, Bk. iv.),

and also with Bunsen—

'Nur euer Er heisst Er,' (in Lessing's *Nathan der Weise*.)

[5-7] We should here expect the result of Jehovah's command in *v.* 1. But the trial-scene is postponed to *v.* 21. What follows arises out of the news of Cyrus's expeditions. The emergency being so great, the (Western Asiatic) nations 'employ their carpenters and goldsmiths to make a particularly good and strong set of gods' (Sir E. Strachey). A vivid description is given of the life in the idol-manufactories (comp. xl. 19, 20). The last feature is 'to see that this excellent idol be made fast, or it might perchance fall' (Dr. Kay)—a fatal omen for its worshippers.

the earth shudder; they draw near and come; [6]every one helpeth his neighbour, and saith to his fellow, Be strong. [7]And the caster strengtheneth the goldsmith; he that smootheth with the hammer him that striketh the anvil: he saith of the soldering, It is good; and he strengtheneth it with nails that it may not totter. [8]But thou, O Israel, my servant, O Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham that loved me; [9]thou whom I have fetched from the ends of the earth, and

vv. 8–13. How different the condition of Israel, i.e., of the faithful kernel of the nation, the spiritual Israel! The prophet vainly endeavours to express the intimacy between it (or rather him) and Jehovah. Note the accumulation of titles. First of all, Israel is **My Servant.** The full meaning of this title will appear later, when the functions of the Servant have to be explained (see on xlii. 1). Here the emphasis is laid on what God does for Israel, not on what Israel does for God. Jehovah speaks in the character of a friend rather than of a master, a friend superior in power as in dignity, and bound to his humble associate not only by the tie of compassion, but by memories of the past. For Israel is not only a 'servant,' but **The seed of Abraham that loved me.** The addition of this title ('that loved me') to the name of Abraham is far from otiose. It conveys a reminder to the Jews that they themselves had come very far short of their ideal, but at the same time inspires a well-grounded hope that Abraham's 'love' will call forth the Divine mercy towards his seed. The choice of it is characteristic of a prophetic writer, who throughout his work gives such a large scope to the affections. Not that it is a weak, nerveless feeling which is here intended; it is a love which is also obedience—for it is 'the fulfilling of the law,' and gratitude—'because he first loved us.' These qualifications must be remembered; they doubtless lay in the background of the prophet's thoughts. Still the most important idea in this part of the revelation is that Abraham was not merely passively but actively Jehovah's friend, not merely his beloved, but (literally) his lover. Vitringa, who would unite both meanings, and Dr. Weir, who takes the former by itself (see crit. note), both destroy the fine proportions of the idea.—The title here given to Abraham seems to have taken a firm hold of the prophet's readers. We find it again in 2 Chron. xx. 7, comp. James ii. 23, and it is still in use among the Arabs, who call Abraham *khalîl ullah* 'friend of Allah,' or simply *khalîl.*——**Whom I have chosen.**] 'For the gifts and calling of God are irretractable' (Rom. xi. 29 Alford). The Divine election of Israel is a prominent doctrine in II. Isaiah; see especially xliii. 10, xliv. 1, xlix. 7.

[9] **The ends of the earth . . .**] The expression is vague. Any rather remote country might be so called in rhetorical language. In Thucydides, the king of the Persians is said to have come to Greece 'from the ends of the earth' (Thucyd. i. 69), and a Spartan speaks of Attica as a distant land (Thucyd. i. 80, referred to by Seinecke).

from its outlying parts have called, and I said to thee, Thou art my servant, I have chosen and not rejected thee; [10] Fear not, for I am with thee; stare not (in thy dread), for I am thy God; I [e]have fixed my choice upon[e] thee, I also help thee, I also uphold thee with my right hand of righteousness. [11] Behold! ashamed and confounded shall be all those that were enraged against thee; they shall become as nought and shall perish—the men of thy strife. [12] Thou shalt seek them, but shalt not find them—the men of thy contention; they shall become as nought, and as nothingness—the men of thy warfare. [13] For I, Jehovah thy God, hold fast thy right hand; I who say unto thee, Fear not, *I* do help thee.

[14] Fear not, thou worm Jacob, ye [f]petty folk[f] of Israel; *I* do help thee (it is the oracle of Jehovah,) and thy Goel is the Holy One of Israel. [15] Behold! I make thee a threshing-

[e] So Del., Naeg.—Strengthen, Ges., Ew., Kay.
[f] Few men, Sept., Vitr, Ges., Hitz., Del. (See crit. note on liii. 25.)

The prophet may possibly therefore intend Egypt—the starting-point of the national history of Israel (comp. Hos. xi. 1). So Ges., Hitz. But the mention of Abraham rather suggests Mesopotamia (see also on xl. 28). Throughout II. Isaiah the point of view shifts from Babylon to Palestine. The prophet had planted himself in Palestine in the opening chapter (xl. 9), and there he for the present remains.

[10] The consequences of Israel's election in Abraham. On his part, freedom from anxiety; on his enemies' part, complete destruction.

——Have fixed my choice upon thee] In xxxv. 3 the verb means 'strengthen,' but in xliv. 14 the sense of 'choose' seems made out, and this meaning is the more suitable one here, as it gives the exhortation to fearlessness a more positive, historical basis.

[11] **The men of thy strife]** i.e., they who strove with thee. The indignation of the speaker shows itself in his quadruple reference to Israel's enemies, and the position of the synonymous phrases at the end of their respective clauses.

vv. 14–16. Not only shall Israel not be overcome; it shall itself, by God's help, overcome its foes. A fine touch is lost in the English here. In the Hebrew of *vv.* 14, 15 *a* Israel is addressed in the feminine gender, as a weak and suffering woman. It was not so in the preceding verses, and in *v.* 15 *b* the prophet significantly reverts to the masculine. All pride must first be humbled, and then the promises can take effect.

[14] **Thy Goel]** i.e., charged with the duty of recovering thy rights and avenging thy wrongs. Comp. xlvii. 3, 4, Jer. l. 33, 34. See Mr. Fenton's article, 'The Goel,' *Theological Review*, Oct. 1878.

[15] This weakest of the nations shall become a power against which nothing can stand. The figure in which this is expressed belongs, like lxiii. 1-6, rather to the pre-evangelical period (taking our prophecy as on the whole the earliest Evangelium), and contrasts at first

roller, sharp, new, double-edged: thou shalt thresh mountains and crush them, and shalt make hills as chaff. [16] Thou shalt winnow them, and the wind shall carry them away, and the tempest shall scatter them; but *thou* shalt exult in Jehovah, and in Israel's Holy One shalt make thy boast.

[17] The afflicted and the poor, seeking water and there is none, and their tongue is dried up with thirst! I Jehovah will answer them; I the God of Israel will not forsake them. [18] I will open rivers on bare hills, and fountains in the midst of highland plains; I will make the wilderness a lake of water,

sight with xlii. 2, 3. But the truth is, that while both the contrasting passages relate to the Servant, the one refers to him as Israel, the other as the branch which is one day to spring out of and to transform Israel. In the interval, the prediction of the violently-obtained successes of the Israelites might well be fulfilled. History tells us that it was so, in a slight degree, in the Maccabean war (comp. Ps. cxlix. 7–9); and if only in a slight degree, the causes are too obvious to need mention. The essence of the prediction, however, is that Israel (i.e., the people of the Jews) in the strength of Jehovah shall overcome all the obstacles to the fulfilment of his destiny.——**A threshing-roller . . . double-edged**] For the application of the figure to success in war, see Mic. iv. 13. In the plains of Hamath the grain is still threshed by revolving sledges, to which circular saws are attached;[1] see also on xxviii. 27.

vv. 17–20. A picture of the past misery of the Jews and their blissful future (see on xl. 11). The dreary interval of the Exile seemed to pious Israelites like 'dwelling in the tents of Kedar.' The principle of life, viz., God's presence consciously experienced, was absent, and each felt with the Psalmist (who speaks not in his own name but in that of the Jewish Church), 'My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and weary land, without water' (Ps. lxiii. 1).[2]

[17] **The afflicted and the poor . . .**] It is an exclamation: the prophet presents his general impression of the Exile in a pictorial form. With all the compensations of life in a flourishing commercial empire, sojourn in a heathen land appeared to pious Israelites like a wandering in the desert. The 'afflicted and the poor' are the whole nation, all of which, whether consciously or unconsciously, had suffered both from its spiritual and political privations. Comp. the use of πτωχοί in Matt. xi. 5.

[18] Hill and dale shall be full of streams: a figure for the highest happiness; comp. xxxv. 7, and the imitation of our passage in Ps. cvii. 35.——**Bare hills**] Such as were found in the desert (Jer. iv. 11, xii. 12), but rarely in Palestine (see on xiii. 2).——**Highland plains**] Such, for instance, as Cœlesyria, or the valley (or, highland plain) of dry bones, Ezek. xxxvii. Cœlesyria is

[1] Thomson, *The Land and the Book*, p. 539.

[2] A golden psalm! That David is not its author seems to be clear from *v.* 11, not to mention other reasons depending on exegesis. It is probably contemporary with Ps. lxi., which, if we may press the phrase 'from the end of the earth (I cry unto thee)' in *v.* 2, must have been written in a distant land, such as Babylonia (comp. notes on xl. 28, xli. 9).

and dry land springs of water. [19] I will give in the wilderness the cedar, the acacia, and the myrtle, and the oleaster; I will set in the desert the pine, the plane, and the sherbin-tree together: [20] that they may at once see and acknowledge, and consider and understand, that Jehovah's hand hath performed this, and Israel's Holy One hath created it.

[21] Bring forward your cause, saith Jehovah; produce your bulwarks, saith the King of Jacob. [22] Let them produce (them), and announce unto us what shall happen: the former things, what they are, do ye announce, that we may reflect on them

still called the Bekâ'a (= *bik'ah*, the word employed here). Comp. xl. 4.

[19] The eyes of the Jews shall be gladdened with a 'paradise' or park of stately and shady trees. The list of trees is eclectic; they were probably not quite all natives of Palestine.——**The myrtle**] The mention of this tree is important with regard to the question of the authorship of these chapters; for, putting aside this prophecy, the myrtle is only referred to in books certainly written after the Captivity (Neh. viii. 15, Zech. i. 8, 10, 11, comp. the proper name Hadassah, Esth. ii. 7). According to Gesenius, *hadas* = the myrtle, in the Arabic dialect of Yemen. Was it imported into Palestine from Arabia, and when?[1] ——**Plane-tree**] 'The renown of the plane-tree fills the whole of antiquity. . . What can be more acceptable in the arid, rocky labyrinths of southern sun-lands, or tune the mind better to devotion and admiration than the tree which, with its glorious, bright foliage on a green-grey stem, overshadows murmuring springs and brooks,' &c. &c.[2] But the plane is not indigenous in the countries of Semitic races. Its home is the mountainous region of the farther Asiatic steppes.[3] ——**Sherbin**] A kind of cedar, (*Cypressus oxycedrus*) commonly known under its Arabic name.

[20] The object of all these wonders. Delivered out of such fearful misery, and introduced into such paradisal bliss, the Jews cannot but repose a lasting and exclusive faith in Jehovah.

[21] The prophet returns to the judgment-scene so suggestively sketched in *vv.* 1–4. Jehovah is the speaker; he addresses, not this time the idolaters, who are too frightened to speak, but the idol-gods themselves. The scene reminds us of Elijah's challenge to the priests of Baal (1 Kings xviii. 21, Naeg.).——**Your bulwarks**] i.e., your arguments. The verbal stem is used in the Mishna of legal disputes; Job, too, uses a similar phrase of the special pleading of his friends, 'Your intrenchments are intrenchments of clay,' Job xiii. 12.——**The King of Jacob**] In opposition to the 'Kings' or patron-gods of the heathen.

[22] The subject on which the idol-gods are to be heard is their possession of supernatural knowledge of the future. Jehovah openly identifies himself with his worshippers—the King with his people; hence, **Let them . . . announce unto us** (so xliii. 9) **what shall happen.** This expression, 'announce' (i.e., predict), seems to me to determine the sense of the next phrase, which has been much disputed. **The former things . . . do ye announce,**

[1] See Dr. Perowne, art. 'Zechariah,' Smith's Bible Dictionary.
[2] Hehn, *Kulturpflanzen und Hausthiere*, p. 248.
[3] *Ibid.* p. 252.

and take notice of their issue; or else the future things do ye declare unto us. [23] Announce ye the things that are to come hereafter, that we may take notice that ye are gods; yea, do good and do evil, that we may at once stare (in

can only mean, Predict, if ye can, the things which are to take place before certain other events ('the things that are to come hereafter,' *v.* 23), in other words, the near as opposed to the distant future (so Vitr., Stier, Hahn, Del.). The idol-gods are summoned to do this accurately and precisely; they are to state **what they** (the former things) **are**; in order that, when the time comes, those who are interested in them may observe whether they have turned out false or true (**take notice of their issue**).—The difficulties of expositors have been mainly caused by the different senses in which the phrase 'former things' is used in this prophecy. In xliii. 9, it means events which have been predicted in former times. In xlii. 9 (with the article), xliii. 18, xlviii. 3, it means former events, with an expressed contrast, in the two first passages, to a new series of events, just coming into the foreground. Ewald adopts the first of these senses. 'The heathen, together with their gods, are called upon,' he says, '. . . to declare that which they had in former times prophesied . . . and which is now being fulfilled.' (So Hengstenberg, Hitzig, Henderson, Alexander.) But the article, which is expressed in the Hebrew, is against this view, and so, it seems to me, is the context. Besides, how easy was it to answer such a call plausibly by reference to the Babylonian divination. Calvin prefers the second sense. 'Sic ergo argumentatur: Si quæ colitis idola, sunt dii, oportet ipsos scire et posse omnia. Atqui nihil possunt, neque in prosperis, neque in adversis: *neque præterita, neque futura tenent*: ergo non sunt dii.' So too Naeg. 'The prophet presupposes that the future can be predicted directly and indirectly, as, for instance, it is all one whether I say, The fruits of this tree will be apples, or, These roots are those of an apple-tree.' On this theory, Jehovah gives a choice to the idol-gods, either to declare the roots of the future in the past, or to give a direct prediction of the future. God alone can reveal the secrets of the past. If the idols can do this, they are Jehovah's equals, and may be trusted for their ability to predict the future. This is very subtle, but hardly consistent with the context.

[23] **Yea, do good and do evil**] (The Hebrew writer puts the two alternatives in juxtaposition—'do good, and (if ye will) do evil'—where we should rather disjoin them.) The Divine speaker waives the question of foreknowledge, and makes the least requirement possible. 'Prove that you are alive, by performing some act whether good (for your friends) or bad (for your foes).'—Or, we may empty the terms 'good' and 'evil' of their moral meaning, and I suppose them to be used proverbially, 'to express the one simple notion of *anything*, exactly as the two words "right and left" merely conveyed the idea of *anywhere* (Num. xx. 17, xxii. 26, Deut. ii. 27, Jon. iv. 11).'[1] In favour of this view, see Gen. xxxi. 24, Num. xxiv. 13 (in which passages, however, the form of expression is not the same[2] as here), and especially Lev. v. 4.—Ewald's explanation, 'Prophesy something, good or

[1] Kalisch, *Commentary on Leviticus*, note on Lev. v. 4.

[2] Not, that is, any part of Hifil. Del. quotes Zeph. i. 12, Jer. x. 5, where the verbs are in Hifil. But, as Dr. Weir remarks, 'Even in these passages there is no reason for departing from the more strict meaning of the words, They can neither bestow blessings, nor inflict injuries.'

amazement) and behold it. [24] Behold! ye are of nought, and your doing is of nothingness: an abomination is he who chooseth you.

[25] I have stirred up one from the north, and he is come;

bad,' i.e. (as Dr. Weir, who holds the same view, puts it) 'the good or evil that is to be evolved in providence,' does not seem to me to suit the context, which requires a more distinct abatement in the Divine demands.

[24] But judgment goes against the idol-gods by default. They can show no prophecies, cannot so much as speak:—they are 'dumb not-gods' (Hab. ii. 18).

[25-29] A summary of the evidence in favour of Jehovah's claims. It was he who raised up Cyrus; none of the idols predicted Cyrus's coming; it is he too who gives to Zion the first tidings of the deliverance of her sons.——**From the north . . .**] Alluding to the union under Cyrus of Media and Persia, the former of which was northward, the latter eastward of Babylonia.——**One who shall proclaim my name**] Whichever rend. we adopt of this passage, it is evidently a prediction of a spiritual change to be wrought in Cyrus in consequence of his wonderful career. Light is thrown upon it by a later prophecy, xlv. 3–7, and by the historical statement in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 23 (= Ezra i. 2), which the most sceptical critic will at least admit as an early interpretation of the prophecy before us. It hence appears that the change in Cyrus, anticipated with such profound conviction, was his conversion to the belief that Jehovah was the author of his success, the only true God. Such a change was a necessary link in the chain of providential events working out Jehovah's purposes; for, until Cyrus was in some sense a brother of the Jews in faith, he could not heartily adopt their national interests. What the prophet foretells is, not a sudden and violent conversion, but simply that Cyrus shall become conscious of his original religious affinity to the Jews, and shall act upon that consciousness. We need only assume in the author a very elementary knowledge of the religion and policy of the Persians, such as (1) that they were monotheists (see on xlv. 7), and (2) that they went upon their conquering march (like the Assyrians in ancient and the Mohammedans in modern times) partly as religious missionaries. It was quite in the spirit of the evangelical religion of both Testaments to maintain that this monotheistic worship was genuine, however unconscious, worship of the True God. 'For,' in the language of a later prophet, 'from the rising of the sun even unto the going down thereof, my name is great among the nations, and *in every place* incense is offered *unto my name*, and a pure oblation: for my name is great among the nations, saith Jehovah Sabáoth;'[1] and, in words attributed to St. Peter, '*In every nation* he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him.'[2] (I have adopted the rend. 'proclaim,' because it implies a somewhat less complete recognition of the True God than the other version, a recognition, in fact, like that of Nebuchadnezzar and Darius (according to Dan. iv. 34–37, vi. 25–27), rather than of a Jewish proselyte, though this, no doubt, would be only a degree less wonderful than the actual admission of a Persian king into the Jewish Church.)

[25] **Viceroys**] It is the Hebra-

[1] Mal. i. 11, comp. last clause of *v.* 14.

[2] Acts x. 35; comp. xvii. 23, 'What therefore ye ignorantly worship, that declare I unto you.'

from the rising of the sun one who [g] shall proclaim [g] my name, and he shall [h] trample upon viceroys as upon mortar, and as the potter that treadeth clay. [26] Who announced it from the beginning, that we might know it, and from aforetime, that we might say, (He is) in the right? Yea, there is none that announced; yea, there is none that declared; yea, there is none that heard your words. [27] [i] A forerunner unto Zion, (saying,) Behold, behold them, and unto Jerusalem a

[g] So Ges., Kay.—Calleth upon, Hitz., Del., Naeg.
[h] So Targ. (alternative), Luzzatto. Come, Hebr. text.
[i] See below.

ised form of the official name for an Assyrian or Babylonian viceroy. See crit. note.

[26] **Who announced it . . .**] 'Announced' = predicted (as constantly in II. Isaiah). The speakers are Jehovah and His worshippers; they place themselves in imagination at the time of the fulfilment of the prediction, when this question will naturally be asked (Naeg.).—— **From the beginning**] i.e., with reference to the period culminating in the career of Cyrus.

[27] **A forerunner unto Zion . . .**] The speaker is evidently Jehovah. The order of the words is curiously irregular; like St. Paul, the writer is overwhelmed by the grandeur of his message.[1] Following Luzzatto, I take the word rendered 'forerunner' (literally, 'first one') as parallel to and synonymous with 'a bearer of good tidings' in the second clause, and the words, 'Behold, behold them' as referring to the return of the Jewish exiles. Perhaps the best commentary on the passage is lii. 7–12, where the same 'bearer of good tidings' is introduced in close connection with the return of Jehovah to Zion at the head of his people. In plain prose the prophet would have written thus, 'I give unto Zion a forerunner and a bearer of good tidings, saying Behold, behold thy sons' (comp. lx. 4). We have thus both a transposition and an omission; and a precisely parallel passage, as far as idiom goes, occurs in Ps. xci. 9, where the first member of the verse runs thus, 'Because thou, Jehovah is my refuge,' and the second, 'Hast made the Most High thy habitation,' so that we have to transpose, in thought, the verb and its object from the second clause into the first, and before 'Jehovah is my refuge,' to supply 'saying.'[2] For the omission of the latter word, comp. also xiv. 8, 1 Kings i. 17, &c.; and for the breaking up of one clause into two rhythmical lines, see crit. note on iii. 12.—A few words as to the other commentators. Ges. and Del. render '(I) first (said) unto Zion, Behold, behold them (i.e., behold the promised blessings), and gave unto Jerusalem a bearer (or, bearers) of good tidings.' De Dieu, preferably, as it seems to me, supposes a transposition, and renders, 'Primus ego dabo Sioni et Hierosolymis lætè annunciantem, Ecce, ecce illa;' so Vitringa and (substantially) Ewald. Naeg., whose work appeared after the above was written, approaches the interpretation here adopted, grammatically

[1] Vitringa's remark is worth quoting: 'Languidior et minus concitata oratio videretur, si illud, *Ecce, ecce illa!* integræ sententiæ esset subjectum. Oratio est hominum qui longum tempus exspectarunt lucem et ad eam anhelant, ubi primum auroræ crepusculum observant: *ecce*, aiunt, *ecce, adest*!'

[2] I am indebted for the reference to a supplementary remark on Hupfeld's note on Ps. *l. c.*, by Dr. Riehm, Hupfeld's editor.

bearer of good tidings I give.[1] [28] But though I look, there is no one, and (though I seek) among these, there is no counsellor, that I may ask them, and they may give an answer. [29] Behold! they are all vanity; nothingness are their works; wind and Chaos are their molten images.

at least. He makes 'the first' (*rĭshōn*), i.e., as he explains it, 'the beginner' (of Israel's redemption), the object to the verb in the second line, but refers it and the parallel phrase 'bearer of good tidings,' to *Cyrus*. 'Behold, behold them,' becomes the exclamation of the prophet, foreseeing the happy consequences of Cyrus's mission. He rightly objects to Del.'s view, that Jehovah was not merely the first but the only source of prophecy, and that we have no right to explain 'first' as if it meant 'alone.' But his own proposal is hardly an improvement as regards the sense. The context is entirely taken up with the subject of prophecy, and how can Cyrus, himself Jehovah's 'Anointed One,' be his own herald (*m'bhassēr*)?

[28] Jehovah once more looks round to see if any of the idols profess an ability to prophesy, but in vain.——**Counsellor**] i.e., prophet, comp. xiv. 26, Num. xxiv. 14.

[29] With a final word of scorn the idolaters are dismissed; their boasted Palladia are but wind and Chaos' (see on xl. 17).——**Works**] i.e., idols, as lvii. 12 (comp. i. 31), Ezek. vi. 6.

CHAPTER XLII.

Contents.—The prophet first describes the functions of the Servant of Jehovah (*vv.* 1–7); then, after two verses of transition (*vv.* 8, 9), he becomes jubilant at the liberation of the Jews, realized by faith as actual (*vv.* 10–17); at last, he returns to the present, and details the obstacles to the Divine manifestation of mercy (*vv.* 18–25).

[1] Behold! my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul is well pleased; I have put my spirit upon him, he

[1] **Behold! my servant**] 'Behold' invites the attention of the world—both of the Jews and of the Nations—to a new revelation. The Servant of Jehovah was first mentioned in xli. 8–10, but so cursorily as only to heighten our curiosity. All that we learn from that passage is that the people of Israel is, in virtue of the call of Abraham, Jehovah's Servant, and (see xli. 16) that his destiny is to subdue mighty nations, and to make his boast in Jehovah. This implies that Israel has not yet gloried in his God as he ought to have done,—an inference which may also be drawn from the statement (xli. 9) that Jehovah has not (as might have been expected) rejected Israel. But our knowledge is as yet very vague and incomplete. In the present magnificently sketched prophecy, the functions of the Servant are more fully described, though the seer does but propound fresh riddles to the interpreter. How, in short, can the description here given of the Servant be reconciled with the address to the Servant as Israel in xli. 8?—Some critics cut the knot by supposing that the prophetic writer

shall cause the law to go forth to the nations. [2]He shall not cry nor clamour, nor cause his voice to be heard in the street;

vacillates between different conceptions of the Servant, but such a vacillation seems most unworthy of a great poet-prophet. Others, making the less sublime passages govern the more, take the Servant to be throughout a collective. But though it must be admitted that 'Servant of Jehovah' in Jeremiah (xxx. 10, xlvi. 27, 28) and Ezekiel (xxxvii. 25) is merely a title for the Chosen People, this is no reason why another prophet should not have given the phrase a deeper meaning. In the sublimest descriptions of the Servant I am unable to resist the impression that a historical person is intended, and venture to think that our general view of 'the Servant' ought to be ruled by those passages in which the enthusiasm of the author is at its height. 'Servant of Jehovah' in these passages seems about equivalent to 'Son of Jehovah' in Ps. ii. 7 ('son' and 'servant' being in fact nearly equivalent in the Old Testament [1]), viz. the personal instrument of Israel's regeneration, or, as we may say on the authority of lxii. 1, the Messiah. This theory seems to be confirmed by certain remarkable phenomena of the Book of Psalms. There, as in II. Isaiah, there are some passages which emphasize the royal aspect of this human and yet (if we do justice to their language) superhuman Person, and others which exhibit Him more particularly (as I, at least, cannot help reading them) in His prophesie, see Ps. xxii.) and (see Ps. cx.) in His priestly aspect. A comparative study of these two books has led me to substantially the same view as Oehler and Delitzsch, and which has been thus metaphorically described by the latter: 'The conception of the Servant of Jehovah is, as it were, a pyramid, of which the base is the people of Israel as a whole, the central part Israel "according to the Spirit," and the summit the person of the mediator of salvation who arises out of Israel.'[2] In the description at the head of chap. xlii., the Servant of Jehovah is distinctly individualised [3] (see on *vv.* 6, 7); his person (it is implied in the acts which are ascribed to him) is at once human and superhuman; in a word, it is substantially the same conception as that given of Jesus Christ in the Gospels (the three first as well as the fourth). To theological reflection the prophet was entirely a stranger, but he seems to have had an increasingly real and vivid conception, so real and so vivid, indeed, at the last as to have suggested that some features of the description (chap. liii.) were borrowed from the life of an eminent prophet. But we cannot consistently stop short there. If there are individualizing features in chap. liii., which cannot be explained from the personification of the Jewish people, this is hardly less true of the passage in chap. xlii., on which we are now entering.—There are two phraseological points of contact between this description and the passage in chap. xli.: 'mine elect (or, chosen),' comp. 'I have chosen thee' (xli. 8); 'whom I uphold,' comp. 'yea, I uphold thee' (xli. 10).

[1] **Mine elect**] A favourite word in II. Isaiah (occurring six times); found also in Ps. lxxxix. 3 and (including plurals) in Ps. cv. 6,

[1] Comp. Gal. iv. 1.

[2] Delitzsch, *Isaiah* (introduction to xlii. 1—xliii. 13); comp. G. F. Oehler, *Old Testament Theology*, ii. 399, 400.

[3] Yet Sept. boldly translates, if the word may be used here, 'Jacob, my servant. . . . Israel, mine elect.' Rashi interprets *vv.* 1–5 of Israel, *vv.* 6, 7 of the prophet Isaiah. Ibn Ezra goes further, and explains the whole section of 'the prophet.' Saadya (according to Ibn Ezra) still more boldly interprets it of Cyrus.

[3]a [a]crushed reed he shall not break, and a dimly burning wick he shall not quench; truthfully shall he cause the law to

[a] Lit. cracked.

43, cvi. 5, 23. Ps. lxxxix. a semi-Messianic psalm, may have been written before the Exile; Ps. cv., cvi. are generally admitted to be post-Exile works.——**I have put my spirit . . .**] In a special sense, for a high and arduous office (comp. on lxi. 1).——**Cause . . . to go forth**] i.e. (1) from its Divine source (li. 4); or (2) from Jerusalem (ii. 3); or (3) from its obscurity (Ps. xxxvii. 6). (1) and (3) may be combined; (2) belongs most naturally to the theory that 'the Servant' = the people of Israel.——**The law**] i.e., 'the law of God, the religion of Jehovah' (Ges.); 'the true religion regarded from its practical side . . . religion[1] as an ordering of life, *νόμος*' (Del.). All religions claim to be 'laws'; the distinction of Biblical religion is that it dwells with increasing earnestness on the moral as opposed to the merely ritual law. The same word (*mishpât*) is used of mere religious observances, like *θρησκεία*, in 2 Kings xvii. 26–28; contrast its spiritual use here and in Jer. v. 4, viii. 7. The corresponding word in Arabic (*dîn*) means: 1. obedience, 2. a religious, 3. a statute or ordinance, 4. a system of usages, rites, and ceremonies (Lane, *s. v. dîn*). In the Korán (Sur. ii. 126) and elsewhere, *dîn Ibrahîm* means the pre-Mohammedan monotheism. ——**To the nations**] The prominence given to the Servant's activity among the heathen is explained by the context. Israel's turn comes later (but see *v.* 7).

[2] **He shall not cry**] His methods shall be purely inward and spiritual, contrasting: 1, with the ostentatious ritual of heathen prophets (1 Kings xviii. 28); 2, with the imperious, disciplinary manner even of prophets like Elijah (comp. the use of 'to call' for 'to prophesy,' xl. 2); 3, with the destructive agency (not without a Divine sanction) of conquerors like Cyrus. It is implied that he might, if he would, enforce obedience; but that, in his Divine condescension (*'anâvah*, Ps. xviii. 36), he waives his right, and limits himself to persuasion.—Dr. Weir wrongly regards *v.* 2 as an anticipation of chap. liii. 'The verse seems to express patient submission: *çâ'ak* necessarily implies distress. The Servant makes no public demonstrations of anguish: in silence he waits upon God.' This is against the context, which implies that there is no serious impediment to his mission; moreover, the use of *çâ'ak* in some of the verbal forms is wider than Dr. Weir admits.[2]

[3] His gentle regard for the germs of spiritual life; lvii. 15 is partly parallel.——**A crushed reed**] This is elsewhere a figure for outward weakness (xxxvi. 6, comp. lviii. 6 Heb.); here, however, the context seems to show that spiritual infirmity is intended, distresses in the physical sphere being reserved for *v.* 7.—Obs. 1. The prophetic Spirit intimates a difference in the spiritual capacities of races. Some (e.g. the Persians) only need to be 'instructed in the way of God more perfectly;' others, though not beyond hope (every creature being rooted in the Creator), are morally as powerless as a 'cracked reed.' 2. It is to the latter class, whether within or without Israel, that the Servant of Jehovah is chiefly sent (comp Matt. ix. 13). He will carefully tend them ('not break' is a litotes) with the pure and wholesome medicine of God's 'law.'——**Truthfully**] More literally, 'according to the standard of truth' (same

[1] Thus Del. as well as the writer falls under the gratuitous censure of Mr. Matthew Arnold. (*The Great Prophecy of Israel's Restoration*, p. xxvii.)

[2] This view has been expressed before Dr. Weir by Kleinert (*Theolog. Studien und Kritiken*, 1862 (pp. 709, 710), and refuted by V. F. Oehler, *Der Knecht Jehova's*, p. 34.

go forth. [4] [b]He shall not burn dimly, neither shall his spirit be crushed,[b] till he shall have set the law in the earth, and for his teaching the countries wait.

[5] Thus saith the God, even Jehovah, he that created the heavens, and stretched them forth, that spread forth the earth and the things that spring out of it, that giveth breath unto the people upon it, and spirit to them that walk through it:

[b] Lit. he shall not be dim, nor be cracked.

idiom as xxxii. 1). There shall be no abatement, no compromise, in his exhibition of the objective truth. A contrast may be implied to 'the splendid falsehoods of heathenism' (Hitz.). 'Faithfully' is too weak a rend.

[4] **He shall not burn dimly**, &c.] So, excellently, Dr. Kay. The phraseology suggests that the Divine envoy is himself a lamp and a reed; in fact, both emblems are suitable. He is a reed, not such as Pascal, but such as Dante describes, humble but not to be broken, and able to cleanse all stains (*Purgatorio*, i. 94–136); and he is also a light of all nations (*v.* 6).——**Till he shall have set . . .**] He shall have one absorbing interest—the final establishment (li. 4) of the true religion. The same concentration, it cannot but be remarked, stands in place of what we call 'character' to the Messiah who fulfils this prophecy. ——**Teaching**] See on i. 10.—— **The countries**] Synonymous with 'the nations.'——**Waits**] i.e., longingly. Frequently used with Jehovah (e.g. Ps. xxxi. 24 A. V. 'hope'), or some gift of Jehovah (Ps. cxix. 43, 74, xxxiii. 18 Weir) for the object.

[5-9] A new revelation (followed by a solemn pledge) defining the mission of the Servant with greater precision. Notice the solemnity of the expressions with which it is introduced and closed. The plan of that mission (such is the underlying thought of *v.* 5) requires an exhibition of the Divine power and wisdom on as large a scale as in creation and preservation. Comp. Zech. xii. 1, which seems to me *a reminiscence of our passage*.——**The God**] i.e., the true God, in opposition to the idol-gods (*v.* 8). The phrase 'the God, Jehovah,' only occurs again Ps. lxxxv. 9.—— **Have called thee in righteousness**] 'In accordance with my revealed purpose that Israel should be my people, and that all nations should acknowledge me for their God.' 'Righteousness,' from the prophetic point of view, is measured with regard to the Divine covenant with Israel. Yet where the limitation to Israel is so plainly broken through, the meaning approaches that which I find thus expressed in Stier, 'the righteousness of the Creator towards his fallen creature, which prepares salvation, and calls the mediator of salvation.' Only we must not continue in the 'kaleidoscopic' manner of Stier, 'and appoints him to set up and impart a new righteousness,' for shortly after Cyrus is addressed in the very same terms (xlv. 13).——**Will keep thee**] Not 'will form thee', for the Servant has been 'formed' or predestinated from eternity (obs. the perfect in xliv. 21). **For a covenant of the people**] 'The people' might be taken for 'the human race,' as in *v.* 5, but xlix. 8, where the whole phrase occurs again, limits the reference to Israel. 'A covenant of the people' means 'the medium or mediator of a covenant between Jehovah and Israel.' As the Servant is called 'a light' in person, so he can be called 'a covenant' in person. Analogies elsewhere are not wanting. Thus in xlix. 6 the same Divine represen-

and the fullness thereof; the countries, and the inhabitants thereof. [11] Let the wilderness and the cities thereof lift up their voice, the villages which Kedar inhabiteth; let the inhabitants of Sela shout; from the top of the mountains let them cry aloud; [12] let them render glory to Jehovah, and declare his praise in the countries!

[13] Jehovah shall go forth as a mighty one, as a man of (many) wars he shall stir up (his) jealousy; he shall cry, yea, he shall roar; against his foes he shall show himself a mighty one. [14] I have been silent for a long time; I have been still, and restrained myself: (now) like

responding to the deeper sense of 'new things' in *v.* 9 (comp. Rev. xiv. 3).—For a general parallel, see xxiv. 14–16.——**Ye that have gone down . . .**] Ye 'that do business on the great waters' (the corresponding phrase in the parallel line, Ps. cvii. 23). But Bishop Lowth's conjecture, well supported in his note on this passage, is highly plausible. A verb as well as a noun seems required for symmetry's sake, and the noun we expect is 'the sea,' i.e., the west.——**The fullness thereof**] i.e., the fishes (comp. on xxxiv. 1).

[11] **The wilderness . . .**] Alluding to the still current distinction between the 'settled' and the 'tent'-Arabs. 'Kedar' (see on xxi. 16) is the representative of the latter.

[12] **Let them render . . .**] 'Let the distant nations of the west glorify Jehovah' (as xxiv. 15).

[13] **Jehovah shall go forth . . .**] This verse gives the reason for the call for a 'new song,' not the gentle ministrations of the Servant, not the irresistible march of Cyrus, but the terrible deeds of the Almighty. It is in effect the Day of Jehovah which is here described; the victories of Cyrus and the fall of Babylon form but one act in that great drama; there is much in the description that follows which can never have been thought to be exhausted by any possible achievements of Cyrus. The Day of Jehovah has two sides, a dark and a bright; the stern work of retribution being over, Jehovah's Servant will step forward, and assume his delightful office of winning hearts.—Will this office be again suspended by the necessity for a fresh interposition of the Almighty? To answer this question, would be to systematise where the prophet has left but vague outlines.—For the representation of Jehovah as a warrior, see xxviii. 21, xxxi. 4, lix. 16, 17, Zech. ix. 13, 14, xiv. 3. It is another instance of the fearless security with which the prophets use popular phraseology of mythical origin, trusting to the general spirit of their revelation to correct any verbal inaccuracies.——**Shall go forth**] Elsewhere a technical phrase for taking the field (see xxxvii. 9, 36), but probably here with an allusion to Jehovah's previous seclusion (see next verse).——**A mighty one**] Or, 'a hero.' Comp. Jehovah's title God-Mighty-One, x. 21, comp. ix. 6.——**Jealousy**] See on ix. 7; also for the combination with 'heroism' or active 'might,' lxiii. 15.

[14] But why does the Mighty One need to 'stir up' his slumbering 'jealousy'? He tells us himself. ——**I have been silent for a long time**] 'To be silent,' when said of God, is 'to leave the prayers, spoken or unspoken, of the faithful unanswered;' comp. Ps. xxviii. 1, Hab. i. 13. Jehovah has been thus silent 'for an age' (so literally)—*ewig lang*, as Del., Naeg. render.

a woman in travail will I groan, I will pant and gasp at once. [15] I will lay waste mountains and hills, and all their herbage will I dry up; and I will turn rivers into habitable lands, and lakes will I dry up: [16] and I will lead the blind by a way which they knew not; through paths they have not known will I make them to go; I will turn darkness into light before them, and rough places into a table-land. These are the things which I will surely do, and I will not let them slip. [17] They shall surely be thrust back; they shall be utterly ashamed, that trust in graven images, that say to molten images, Ye are our gods.)

[18] Hear, ye deaf; and ye blind, look, that ye may see.

It is the exaggeration of strong emotion. So lvii. 11, comp. lviii. 12, lxi. 4.——**Like a woman in travail . . .**] A figure for unrestrainable impatience, not without a secondary reference to the new birth of Israel and of the world. (Comp. xxvi. 17, 18, lxvi. 8, 9.)——**At once**] i.e., these signs of anguish shall be unintermittent.

[15, 16] Judgment and redemption side by side. **Mountains and hills** are symbols of the heathen world in general (not merely Babylonia). ——**The blind**] Not, I venture to think, 'the spiritually blind' (Del., Naeg.), which hardly suits the context, but 'the perplexed and desponding' (Calv.); there is an exact parallel in lix. 9, 10.—The difficulties of the commentators arise from not observing that *vv.* 10–17 are parenthetical (see on *v.* 18), and were probably introduced by an afterthought. —— **I will surely do**] The tenses are prophetic perfects; so also the first tense in *v.* 17.

[17] **Be thrust back**] The idolaters are represented as marching against the true believers. Suddenly an invisible hand thrusts them back. Comp. for the figure Ps. xxxv. 3, 4, and for the rend. Hupfeld on Ps. vi. 11.—Prof. Birks makes a break at the end of *v.* 16, connecting *v.* 17 with *v.* 18. But this spoils the contrast between the believing blind in *v.* 16 and the unbelievers in *v.* 17 (see the same contrast in l. 10, 11), and introduces a premature reference to idolatry into the new paragraph.

vv. 18–20. We are confronted here with an at first sight perplexing discrepancy, viz., that whereas in *vv.* 1–7 'the Servant' is introduced as an indefatigable worker in Jehovah's cause, and as specially appointed 'to open blind eyes,' in *v.* 19 we find 'My servant' and 'My messenger' described as spiritually 'blind' and 'deaf.' This, however, is only one of those apparent inconsistencies in which Eastern poets and teachers delight, and which are intended to set us on the search for a higher and reconciling idea. The higher idea in the case before us is that the place of the incompetent messenger shall be taken by one both able and willing to supply his deficiencies and to correct his faults. Israel the people being as yet inadequate to his sublime destiny, Jehovah's own 'elect' shall come to transform and elevate the 'unprofitable servant.'

19 Who is blind but my servant? and deaf as my messenger whom I send[g]? Who is blind as the surrendered one, and blind as the servant of Jehovah? 20 Thou hast seen many things, but thou observest not; he openeth the ears, and

[g] Or, will send.

18 **Hear, ye deaf . . .**] Jehovah is the speaker; he has before him a company of spiritually deaf and blind (see on xliii. 8). Surely (we may suppose him to make this reflection) they are not all stone-deaf; some may be able by exerting the power yet graciously continued to them to hear God speaking in history and in prophecy (comp. *v.* 23)! — Thus it would almost seem as if Jehovah himself had assumed the function of 'opening blind eyes' previously ascribed to the Servant. But there is no real discrepancy. The operations of Jehovah and of his Servant are all one; Jehovah must nominally interpose here in order that the incompetence of his people-Servant may be exposed, and the necessity for another Servant, springing out of but far worthier than Israel, be made clear.

19 **Who is blind but my Servant?**] The blind and deaf Servant means the people of Israel, regarded as a whole, in its present state of spiritual insensibility.—Jehovah is sometimes described anthropomorphically as 'saying' or, more fully, as 'saying to his heart,' i.e., to himself (Gen. viii. 21). It is such a 'saying' that we have here. Jehovah sadly reflects, 'Who among earth's inhabitants is so blind and deaf as Israel my Servant?' Strange fact! The servant, who needs a sharp eye to catch the least gesture of his master (Ps. cxxiii. 2)—the messenger, who requires an open ear to receive his commissions, is blind—is deaf!—To interpret 'Who is blind, &c,' of Jesus Christ, as if 'the guilt and shame of the people [were] here enforced by direct contrast with the true Israel, the Prince who has power with God,' and as if the true no less than the phenomenal Israel could be called blind and deaf, with reference to his slowness to take offence (Prof. Birks), is to go directly counter to Biblical usage.[1] In fact, the only passages quoted in support of this farfetched view are Ps. xxxviii. 13, where the *sin-conscious* psalmist resigns his defence to God, and John viii. 6–11, where the Saviour (if this interpolated narrator may be followed), under exceptional circumstances, refuses an answer to his persecutors.——**Whom I send**] This alludes, I think, not to the description in *vv.* 1–8, but to the original commission of Israel, referred to in xli. 8–13. The present tense is used because the character of Jehovah's Servant is indelible (as we have been told already, xli. 9). In spite of Israel's offences, Jehovah still 'sends' and 'will (continue to) send' him. Chap. liii. will throw further light on this.——**As the surrendered one**] One might almost say, 'as the Moslem,' for the prophet's word (*m'shullām*) is closely akin to the Arabic *muslim* (Moslem), i.e., 'he that devoteth or submitteth himself (to God).' Comp. Emerson: 'A more *surrendered* soul, more informed and led by God.' Apparently this word became a favourite among the pious Jews; it appears as a proper name in Ezra viii. 16, x. 15, 29.

20 **Thou hast seen . . .**] The people of Israel is likened to a man of mature years and experience, by which he has failed to profit. A

[1] See vi. 9, 10, Jer. v. 21, Ezek. xii. 2, Zech. vii. 11.

heareth not! [21] It was Jehovah's pleasure for his righteousness' sake to make the instruction great and glorious; [22] and yet it is a people robbed and plundered; snared are all of them in holes, and hidden in houses of restraint; they are become a prey, and there is none to rescue—a spoil, and none that saith, Restore. [23] Who among you will give ear to this, will attend, and be obedient for the time to come? [24] Who delivered up Jacob for a spoil, and Israel unto robbers? Was it not Jehovah, he against whom we sinned, and they would not walk in his ways, and were not obedient unto his instruction? [25] So he poured upon him in fury his anger, and the violence of war, and it set him on fire round about, but he took no notice, and kindled upon him, but he would not lay it to heart.

different image from that in liv. 4*b*.

[21] **For his righteousness' sake**] In accordance with his declared purpose, Jehovah sent a constant succession of prophetic teachers 'since the day that their fathers went forth from the land of Egypt' (Jer. vii. 25). A stream of self-consistent and divinely inspired instruction struck the outward organ of hearing, but, alas! not the inner ear (*v.* 20). And yet this 'instruction' was 'great and glorious,' both in its contents and, so far as the course of history had yet gone (see *v.* 9), in its fulfilment. —— **Instruction**] Or, teaching. Hebr. *tōrāh*; see on i. 10.

[22] **And yet it is a people . . .**] Clearly these expressions are not to be strained. It is very improbable that any large portion of the exiles suffered literal imprisonment or confiscation of goods. The depressed life of the Exile is what is meant; see *v.* 7 (with note), Ps. lxxix. 11, cii. 20, Zech. ix. 11.—— **In holes**] Rutgers[1] draws an argument from this passage against the theory of the late origin of II. Isaiah, because 'holes' or caves are characteristic of Judea, and not of Babylonia. This is very plausible. And yet might not the prophet use figures drawn from the older Hebrew writings, in which caves are so frequently referred to? Comp. *I. C. A.*, p. 201.

[24] **Against whom we sinned**] The prophet, identifying himself with his people (as in lix. 9–13, but scarcely in ch. liii.). Contrast the argument of the unhappy Jewish exiles in Egypt, Jer. xliv. 17–19—a most instructive passage!

[25] **Kindled upon him**] There is an evident allusion to this passage in xliii. 2, where the same phrase occurs, 'a striking instance,' as Dr. Kay well observes, 'of the double aspect in which Israel is presented in these chapters. The corrupt nation is subjected to the fire of judgment; but the Israel of God suffers no hurt.'

[1] Dr. Rutgers is, or was, the leading representative of orthodox views of the Old Testament at Leyden. My reference is to his able work on the genuineness of II. Isaiah (*De echtheid van het tweede gedeelte van Jesaja*, Leiden, 1866), p. 79.

CHAPTER XLIII.

Contents.—'*All* Israel shall be saved.' Jehovah is the only God; prophecy is his evidence; his word none can make void. An example of such an irreversible decree is the fall of Babylon and the restoration of Israel to unimaginable felicity.

[1] But now, thus saith Jehovah thy creator, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel: Fear not, for I redeem thee; I have called thee by name; mine art thou. [2] When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee,—and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou goest through the fire, thou shalt not be scorched, and the flame shall not kindle upon thee. [3] For I Jehovah am thy God; (I) Israel's Holy One, thy deliverer; for thy ransom do I give

[1] **But now . . .**] Another of those bold transitions in which our prophet delights. It is not, however, entirely abrupt. 'But now' indicates that there has been a conflict between Divine love and Divine wrath, and that the former has gained the victory. In fact, the wrath of Jehovah was but grieved affection. Its force is *now* for the time spent (comp. xl. 2); Jehovah will *now* deliver and protect, reassemble and restore his people.——**Thy creator**] Israel is a new and singular product, in which special Divine potencies have been at work: therefore 'precious' (*v.* 4). Among these potencies is affliction, which to the unfaithful Israel is only depressing or even destructive, but to the faithful is an instrument of purification. It is the faithful Israel (in spite of the point of contact in *v.* 24) to which the following promises belong.——**I redeem thee**] Lit., 'I have redeemed thee;' i.e., historically of the past; and prophetically, of the future. Obs., verb and participle occur above twenty times in II. Isaiah. ——**Called thee by name**] Lit. 'called with thy name,' i.e., proclaimed it. To utter a person's name, in primitive times, might be a grievous injury if the speaker's intention were malicious; it might also be a high distinction, if the speaker were much superior in rank. Comp. Ex. xxxi. 2, xxxiii. 12, 17. Israel was specially honoured, for Jehovah combined his own name with Israel's, calling it 'my people.' It was a *kunya* (as in the case of Cyrus, xlv. 4).—— **Mine art thou**] Alluding to the Sinaitic covenant (see Ex. xix. 5, 6). On that wonderful spiritualisation of the common primitive idea of a patron-deity, the German reader should consult an excellent chapter in Hermann Schultz's *Altestamentliche Theologie* (first ed.), i. 401–410 ('der Bund').

[2] **When thou passest through the waters . . .**] A glance at the troubles in store for the Babylonian empire, but also at any subsequent ones in which the Jews might be involved. The revelation fuses all these together in one visionary image. The same use of the figures of fire and water occurs in Ps. lxvi. 12, comp. Dan. iii. 17, 27.——**When thou goest through the fire**] Comp. on xlii. 25.

[3] **For thy ransom do I give Egypt**] No price is too great for Israel's redemption; other nations

Egypt, Ethiopia and Seba in thy stead. [4] Since thou art precious in my sight; art honourable, and I love thee; therefore will I give men in thy stead, and peoples for thy life. [5] Fear not, for I am with thee; from the sunrising will I bring thy seed, and from the sunsetting will I gather thee; [6] I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Restrain thou not; bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the end of the

will be sacrificed to attain it.—The passage implies (1) that the judgments which fall upon unbelievers are arranged providentially for the good of Jehovah's chosen ones—in this sense, 'the wicked are a ransom for the righteous' (Prov. xxi. 18, comp. xi. 8); (2) that Jehovah has a personal regard for Cyrus as well as for the Jews, and considers his generosity to the latter (so little to be expected in an Eastern conqueror) as worthy of a recompence.[1] History ratified the prophetic word; what Cyrus had planned, Cambyses carried out. A more minutely exact correspondence is not to be required. A literal fulfilment is not the test of a prophet's veracity; and in xlv. 14 another description of the prospects of these nations is given, which it is not easy to reconcile with our passage. It is clear that the prophet sometimes writes with an eye on the actual political circumstances, and sometimes is wholly absorbed in the glories of an age still future—the Messianic.——**Seba**] i.e., the peninsula of Meroe, or N. Ethiopia.

[4] **Men**] i.e., ordinary men, comp. Jer. xxxii. 20, 'in Israel and among men' (Hebr. *'ādām*).

[5, 6] From east and west, north and south, the Israelites are to be gathered to their home. (Parallel passages, xlix. 12, Ps. cvii. 3).—Historically interesting, as proving the wide extent at thus early a date of the Jewish Diaspora (comp. xi. 11, and note). Not only in Babylonia and Assyria, but in the 'far lands' of the Mediterranean, and even perhaps in China (xlix. 12)—one at least of the 'ends of the earth' to the geography of that day, there were bands of Jewish exiles. But the peculiarity of the passage does not so much consist in this, as in the fact that it contains no express mention of Babylonia, where in general the scene of this prophetic drama is laid. It thus supplies a striking evidence of the truth that the scope of a prophecy is not to be confined to a single age or country. These latter chapters of the Book of Isaiah are something more than a private revelation for the exiles in Babylon. Great as are the miseries of the author's real or assumed present, he is not so absorbed by them as to forget the glories in prospect.—Rutgers[2] infers from this passage that chaps. xl.—lxvi. cannot have been written during the Exile; otherwise Babylon would, he thinks, have been referred to. The foregoing remarks tend to show that the passage has no bearing whatever on the question of date. Rutgers also refers to xi. 11, as showing that Isaiah had as full a view of the Jewish dispersion as is implied in the verses before us. But this only proves (assuming, as I am willing to do, the genuineness of that passage) that Isaiah might have written these verses, not that he actually did so. Besides, that passage contains one word (Assyria), which to some extent diminishes the value of the comparison. ——**Bring my sons . . .**] Here the earth as a whole must be addressed. 'Bring' implies the escort of the Gentiles (xlix. 22).——**My daughters**] Obs. the kind and

[1] The promise to Nebuchadnezzar in Ezek. xxix. 18, 19, is only partly parallel.
[2] *De echtheid van het tweede gedeelte van Jesaja*, pp. 78, 79.

earth, [7] every one who is called by my name, and whom for my glory I have produced, have formed, yea, have prepared.

[8] [a] Bring forth [a] a blind people which hath eyes, and deaf who have ears. [9] All ye nations, assemble yourselves; and let the peoples gather together: who among them can announce such things? and former things let them declare unto us; let them produce their witnesses, that they may be

[a] He bringeth forth, Hitz., Alexander. I will bring forth, Ew. (changing one letter).

even respectful mention of the female sex in Messianic descriptions; see xi. 12 (note), lx. 4, Joel ii. 28, Gal. iii. 28.

[7] **Who is called by my name**] i.e., who is Jehovah's servant. 'Israel must live, because the name of Jehovah has been named on him.' Dr. Weir, comparing Matt. xxii. 32.——**Produced . . . formed . . . prepared**] The three verbs 'seem to describe the process of formation from the first rough cutting to the perfecting of the work; comp. xlvi. 11' (Dr. Weir). The first verb, however, is restricted to the Divine creative operations, whether such as imply a pre-existent material, or such as do not. The Blessing of Jacob (Gen. xlix.) shows us how rough was the material out of which the church-nation of Israel was carved.

[8] Another of those mysterious voices, of which we have heard already (xl. 3–8), bursts on the ear. **Bring forth a blind people . . .**] The ministers of justice are the persons addressed. Israel, once blind and deaf, but now in possession of sight and hearing, is to be brought into court (see on xli. 1). For what purpose will appear later (*v.* 10).—Almost all critics explain 'a blind people that hath eyes,' as if it were 'a people that hath eyes and seeth not.' This, however, is certainly not a natural view of the construction, nor does it harmonise well with the context, for how can a spiritually insensible people be produced as a witness against the heathen nations? Calvin and Ewald seem to be nearer the mark. The former comments thus: 'Sic educam cæcos, ut visum ipsis restituam; surdos ita liberabo, ut aures recuperent;' the latter, 'He will now disengage from their fetters those who in xlii. 7, 18, were called blind and deaf, that they may again receive eyes and ears (as in xlii. 7).' Both Calvin and Ewald, however (the one virtually, the other avowedly), alter the first word; the former rendering 'that I may bring out;' the latter, 'I will bring out;' and both failing to see the close connection between this and the next verse. The truth is that this passage is reversely parallel to xlii. 20, where of the actual Israel it is said, that 'he has seen many things, but observeth not;' and that 'he openeth the ears, but heareth not.' It is to Stier that the credit belongs of restoring its natural sense to this otherwise obscure verse.

[9] **All ye nations, assemble yourselves**] On the one side, the spiritual Israel, a small company of believers in Jehovah, has already taken its place; a mighty host of heathen nations is now summoned to appear on the other. The question is then put to the latter, Which of their gods can produce predictions such as those in *vv.* 1–7? To prove that they can, the Divine speaker continues, let them mention **former things**, i.e., past events which they have correctly foretold. ——**Unto us**], viz., Jehovah and his servants (as xli. 22).——**That they may be justified**] In the event of their professing to have foretold events correctly, they must

justified, and let them (?) hear, and say, It is truth. [10] Ye are my witnesses, (the oracle of Jehovah,) and my Servant, whom I have chosen, that ye may acknowledge, and believe me, and understand that I am He; before me no God was formed, neither after me shall there be. [11] I, I am Jehovah, and beside me there is no deliverer. [12] *I* have announced [b]

[b] Hebr. text inserts, And delivered. Probably this is merely a miswritten form of the following verb. Bunsen proposes to read, And made known.

produce witnesses to justify their assertions.——**And let them hear, and say, It is truth**] I do not understand this. The words (or rather the word) put into the mouth of the speakers is more suitable to a judge than either to a defendant or to witnesses. It would be bold to alter the text, but the passage would at once become intelligible, if we might emend the third person into the first (on the analogy of xli. 26), and render 'and that we may hear, &c.' The alternative is, with Luther, Ges., and Naeg., to make the subject indefinite ('dass . . . *man* höre'); so Dr. Weir, 'that *men* may hear.' But this is not a natural interpretation.

[10] But the idol-gods are dumb; they have no witnesses to produce. Meantime Jehovah calls upon *his* witnesses, viz., his people Israel, which has had abundant proof of his predictive power.——**And my Servant**] i.e, 'and ye are also my Servant, the chosen instrument of my purposes;' comp. xliv. 1. So Del., Seinecke, Riehm, Naeg., taking the phrase as a second predicate. Others (Vitr., Ges., Hitz., Ew., Stier, Kay) explain, 'and so (or, and so especially) is my Servant,' taking the two latter words as a second subject, and distinguishing the Servant from the people of Israel (at any rate, from the natural Israel). But this is less obvious. The only antithesis suggested by the context is that between Israel and the heathen world (Naeg.).——**That ye may acknowledge . . .**] It is not only in Jehovah's interest, but in that of his people (the spiritual Israel), that this trial-scene is arranged. The spectacle of the futility of heathenism will confirm their faith in the true God.——**I am He**] See on xli. 4.——**Before me . . .**] i.e., as Dr. Alexander well puts it, 'all other gods were made, but none of them was made before I had a being.' There is also an ironical allusion to the incongruity of 'forming' him who is man's 'former' (xlv. 9).——**After me**] i.e., 'after I (*per impossibile*) have ceased to exist.'

[11] Then follows a series of royal self-assertions, resuming what has been proved above.——**I, I am Jehovah**] See on xlii. 8.——**No deliverer**] Alluding to *v.* 3.

[12] Prediction the proof of divinity. **I have announced . . .**] 'What none of the heathen prophets can do (*v.* 9), I, Jehovah, have performed.'—The text-reading presents great difficulties. Such an inconsistent series of verbs as 'announced—delivered—declared,' can hardly have come from the pen of the prophet. Even if it were conceivable, another objection would remain in force. The subject of the prophesying referred to in *v.* 9 (comp. xlii. 9) is the restoration of the Jews and the Messianic glories. Neither of these events had as yet taken place. Consequently the middle verb of the series must be practically future, while the first and third are past, which is most unlikely. Bunsen's conjecture is plausible, but less so, in my opinion, than that proposed above. [Dr. Weir follows Stier, explaining 'declared' as = 'proclaimed the deliverance which prophecy had announced.' He supports this by

and declared, for there is no stranger among you; and ye are my witnesses (the oracle of Jehovah), and I am God. 13 Also from (this) day forth I am He, and there is none that rescueth out of my hand; I work, and who can turn it back?

14 Thus saith Jehovah your Goel, the Holy One of Israel, For your sake I have sent unto Babylon, and will bring down [c] as fugitives,[c] all of them, and [d] the Chaldæans into the

[c] Bars (i.e. defences, or, possibly, defenders), Theodotion, Vulg., A. E., Lowth, Henderson, Luzzatto (one vowel-point different).

[d] The shouting of the Chaldæans into sighing, Hitz., Ew., Luzzatto (one point different).

a reference to xlviii. 20. It should be remembered, however, that in nine out of sixteen passages in II. Isaiah the verb *hishmi'a* means 'to prophesy.']——**For there is no stranger . . .**] 'Stranger' here, as also in Deut. xxxii. 16, is short for 'strange, or foreign, god' (for the phrase in full, see Ps. xliv. 20, lxxxi. 9). No God but Jehovah had any power for good or for evil over Israel.—The expression seemingly admits the claims of other gods for other nations, but the prophets sometimes understate their own belief, through adopting popular phraseology. According to our prophet, the idols were 'of the nature of nothing' (xli. 24).—— **And I am God**] This is the inference from all the foregoing facts. 'And' = consequently (as xl. 18, 25 Del.). 'God;' Hebr. *'el*, the Strong One—the common Semitic name for God.

13 **Also from (this) day forth . . .**] A fresh fact is here mentioned. Jehovah, who had for a time withdrawn Himself, has begun again to manifest Himself; and if He, the unique, the unchangeable one, is at work, the result is certain. ——**Who can turn it back?**] i.e., who can reverse it? The same phrase occurs in Job ix. 12, xi. 10, xxiii. 13, thus forming another of the numerous affinities between II. Isaiah and Job. In Isa. xiv. 27, where it also occurs, it closes a prophecy; and here too it seems to mark a secondary pause in the discourse.

14 An example of such a work, which no man can reverse.—— **For your sake**] i.e., not for Israel's sake, as Israel, but as the Servant of Jehovah.——**I have sent**] viz., 'my consecrated ones' (xiii. 3).—— **And will bring down . . .**] i.e., 'and will bring all of them (viz., the mixed multitude of merchants in Babylon, see on xiii. 14–22), and especially ("and" as in ii. 1) the Chaldæans, down into the ships of their shouting.' The rhythmic structure of the verse obliges the prophet-poet to break up this clause into two. Hence arises some amount of difficulty in the exegesis. 'To bring down,' if used without qualification, would, in such a connection, most naturally be referred to the overthrow of proud Babylon; comp. x. 13, xiv. 11, 15. But here the verb does not really stand unqualifiedly; it must be taken together with 'in (or into) the ships,' and then the phrase becomes analogous to 'to go down upon the sea' (xlii. 10, &c.) for 'to embark on a voyage.' 'The ships of their shouting' is one of those *équivoques* in which the prophets delight. It suggests that the very ships, which formerly resounded with shouts of exultation, now only echo with the cries of despair, and thus forms a condensed elegy on the strange *περιπέτεια* in the fortunes of the Chaldæans. [The Hebr. *rinnah*,

ships of their shouting,[d] [15] I, Jehovah, your Holy One, the creator of Israel, your King. [16] Thus saith Jehovah, who giveth a road through the sea, and a path through mighty waters, [17] who bringeth forth chariot and horse, army and force—together they lie down, they cannot arise, they are quenched, they have gone out as a wick:—[18] Remember ye not former things, and things of aforetime consider ye not.

in fact, will bear both meanings, 'cry of joy' and 'cry of grief,' though when used, as here, with a suffix, the latter meaning is the first which offers itself.[1] There is a singularly exact parallel in xvi. 9, 10, where 'the cry' (*hēdād*) is used in a similarly double sense of the vintage-cheer and the battle-shout.] Either reference (to rejoicing or to lamentation) is equally appropriate in this context. Babylonia was famous for its ships in the very earliest period of its history.[2] It was also famous for its music, and songs to the music of the cymbal (xiv. 11) may well have enlivened the voyages of its travelling merchants. The value of its ships as means of escape was seen by Merodach Baladan at one of the many crises of his history.[3] The Assyrian annalist mentions this in his usual dry way; the prophet is a poet as well, and hears the plaintive note of brave men 'crying aloud' (as xxxiii. 7).—The flight of the foreign merchants from the doomed city is referred to twice elsewhere; see xiii. 14, xlvii. 15.—The phraseology of the verse has struck so many critics as singular that I hesitate to express a strong opinion in favour of the accuracy of the text. But why may not a poet express himself in an original manner? There is nothing contrary to usage in the disputed words, and Hitzig's and Ewald's attempts at correction are certainly un-Hebraic, not to add (with Del.) bombastic. —— **Fugitives**] The Hebr. word (*bārīkhīm*) is uncommon, but occurs again in the same sense in xxvii. 1, xv. 5 (probably, but there is a similar doubt as to the reading), Job xxvi. 13. The reading *bᵉrīkhīm* 'bars' does not cohere well with the context, and involves a less natural construction.

vv. 16–21. A fresh prophecy of redemption, taking in a much wider field than Babylonia. The prophecy itself begins at *v.* 18; it is introduced by a vivid representation of the passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea.—— **Who giveth a road**] Not 'who gave,' but 'who giveth' a road, as in the typical instance of old (so Del.). Comp. on li. 9, 10.

[18] **Remember ye not . . .**] So Jeremiah (xxiii. 7, 8) points to a time when the great manifestation of the living God shall no longer be the deliverance from Egypt, but the restoration of Israel from 'the recesses of the earth.' (Comp. by all means Jer. iii. 16, 17.) Both to Jeremiah and to our prophet the chief glories of the second manifestation are spiritual. 'I will make a new covenant . . . I will put my law in their inward parts' (Jer. xxxii. 31, 33). 'They

[1] Dr. Weir remarks, '*Rinnah* with suffixes never means "the cry of joy," always "the prayer cry," being found only in the Psalms, and in Jer. xiv. 12.'

[2] Mr. Boscawen states that the ships of Ur and other cities on the Persian Gulf are mentioned in the very earliest Babylonian legends (*Athenæum*, July 20, 1878).

[3] Schrader, *K. A. T.*, pp. 224, 225; *Records of the Past*, xi. pp. 51, 52. I am indebted to Dr. Weir for the illustration.

19 Behold, I work out a new thing; already it is shooting forth;[e] will ye not give heed to it?[e] Yea, I will set a road in the wilderness, rivers in the desert. 20 The beasts of the field shall honour me, jackals and ostriches, because I gave waters in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my elect. 21 The people which I have formed unto me, they shall tell out my praise.

[e] So Hitz., Ew., Weir.—Shall ye not experience it, Ges., Del., Naeg.

shall tell out my praise' (*v.* 21). **——Former things**] Jehovah's past interpositions (comp. xlvi. 9).

19 **A new thing**] An unheard-of thing; see on xlii. 9, and comp. Jer. xxxi. 22. Note the singular.—— **It is shooting forth**] A stronger statement than in xlii. 9 *b*. Either events were more advanced than when the prophet penned that verse, or he has become more clear-sighted owing to an increase of faith. The latter alternative is preferable. Faith, like friendship,[1] gives intensified keenness of vision. Like other faculties, it grows by exercise. Hence in the words **Will ye not give heed to it?** the prophet calls upon his audience by a vigorous effort to see as he sees, and to recognise the roots of the future in the present. (In support of the rend. see xl. 21, xlviii. 6, 7, lviii. 3. The two former passages seem to me decisive. For alt. rend. comp. 'Are they not written?' i.e., 'Surely they are written.) **A road in the wilderness . . .**] A symbolical description of the blissful state of the restored exiles. All their wants are supplied. The wilderness has become like the garden of Eden. Life is one stately procession. (Comp. on xxxv. 8, xl. 11, xli. 18.)

20 **The beasts of the field**] Even the wild beasts shall put off their ferocity, and by their changed natures unconsciously do honour to Jehovah. The prophet's best commentator is St. Francis. See further on xi. 6–9.

21 But it is in Israel that this moral regeneration attains its climax. They alone have at once the physical power and the will to **tell out my praise** (comp. Ps. lxxix. 13). Thus Jehovah's purpose in 'forming' them shall be attained. By 'telling out' what God has done for them, and why He has done it, they shall overcome the inner opposition of the unconverted nations. Comp. the development of this in 1 Pet. ii. 9.

vv. 22–24. But the opposition between the ideal and the actual Israel forces itself upon the prophet's attention, and the tone of revelation, according to its wont, adapts itself to this altered mood. Jehovah now sums up the religious history of the Exile, pourtraying it as it appears from a distance. It is a black picture. No doubt there were redeeming points in this history, but not enough to lighten the prevailing hue to any appreciable extent. *These three verses are among the most disputed in II. Isaiah.* According to some (e.g., Hengst., Stier, Naeg., Kay), they furnish strong evidence that the author lived before the Babylonian Exile; according to others (e.g., Ew., Del.), they prove that his real or assumed standing-ground is among the exiles at Babylon. The difficulty

[1] Alluding to Leonora's bold reversal of a popular judgment :—'Die Freundschaft ist gerecht,' Goethe's *Tasso*, i. 1.

22 But[f] thou hast not called upon me,[f] O Jacob, [g]much less hast thou wearied thyself about me,[g] O Israel. 23 Thou

[f] Upon me thou hast not called, Del., Kay, Weir.
[g] Yea, thou has been weary of me, Calv., Naeg., Weir.

lies in the interpretation of the first part of *v.* 23 and the first part of *v.* 24. These two clauses *appear* to deny absolutely that sacrifices had been offered by Israel to Jehovah. Yet how, asks the former class of commentators, could the people be charged with this neglect as an offence, sacrifices being impossible in a foreign land (Hos. iii. 4, Ps. li. 18, 19)? And, even apart from this, does not Jehovah declare by the same prophet, 'He that slaughtereth an ox (for sacrifice) is (equal to) a man-slayer' (lxvi. 3)? Now, if the first of these questions is justified, it certainly follows that the verses cannot have been written with a view to the circumstances of the Exile, and as the omission of sacrifices cannot be charged against the pre-exile Jews, we must assume that the offerings so painfully missed (*vv.* 23, 24) are those which are the natural expression of faithful obedience. But I do not think we need admit that the question referred to is justified; I do not believe that the neglect of sacrifices is charged against the people as an offence. I cannot, of course, *prove* my theory; the points in dispute are exegetical, and require tact rather than logic for their settlement. Briefly, my view of the connection is the following:—'But thou, O Israel, hast not performed thy part of the covenant between us. Thou hast not even performed the light duty of prayer; much less hast thou gone conscientiously through the toilsome services of the ceremonial law. True, I did not impose this burden upon thee; penitence and prayer were all that I demanded of thee in thy banishment.[1] In fact, I relieved thee of a burden, whereas thou didst lay upon me the load of thy aggravated guilt.'

22 **Thou hast not called upon me**] The Jews in exile are here charged with the neglect of prayer to Jehovah. That there was a faithful section of the nation, which poured out its heart before God, we know from the group of Exile-psalms, and perhaps from Isa. xxvi. 16. There is also a later passage in II. Isaiah (lviii. 2–4), which implies that, when the hope of deliverance dawned upon the Jews,[2] many of them put up at least formal petitions to Jehovah. But the statement of the revelation is doubtless true of the majority of the exiles during the greater part of the Captivity.—Alt. rend. is explained by Del. as meaning that 'Israel could exert itself to call upon other gods, but not upon Jehovah;' by Calv. and Vitr., that its prayers were purely formal, and therefore not accepted by God (comp. Zech. vii. 5). In the Hebr. 'me' is prefixed ('But not me,' &c.); but this is probably for the sake of euphony (comp. ix. 2 *Q'rî*, Ps. vii. 14, in the Hebrew). I do not think it can be emphatic, otherwise *v.* 22 *a* will not be parallel to *v.* 23 *a*.——**Hast thou wearied thyself**] Note the parallelism between the second halves of this and the two next verses.

[1] Or, without materially affecting the context, we may adopt the alternative view of *v.* 23 *b* mentioned in the note on that passage.
[2] I accept for the present occasion the view of Ewald and Delitzsch that the description in chap. lviii. relates to an episode in the life of the Jewish exiles.

hast not brought me the sheep of thy burnt-offerings, and with thy sacrifices thou hast not honoured me; I have not made a slave of thee with offerings, nor wearied thee with incense. [24] Thou hast not bought me sweet cane with money, and with the fat of thy sacrifices thou hast not sated me; thou hast altogether made a slave of me with thy sins, and wearied me with thine iniquities. [25] I, even I, blot out thy rebellions for my own sake, and thy sins I will not remember. [26] Call to my remembrance, let us plead together: recount thou, that thou mayest appear righteous. [27] Thy first father

[23] **Thou hast not brought me . . .**] This looks like an accusation, but must be taken as qualified by the second half of the verse. ——**The sheep . . .**] Alluding to the daily morning and evening sacrifice.—The three kinds of sacrifices, and the incense, are grouped as in Jer. xvii. 26 (Stier).——**I have not made a slave of thee with offerings**] Sacrifices fell through during the Exile (see above). But it is also possible to explain this passage with Stier and Del. on the analogy of Jer. vi. 20, vii. 21-23.

[24] **Sweet cane**] This was an ingredient in the holy anointing oil (Ex. xxx. 23).——**Wearied me**] The same expression is used in a similar context in Mal. ii. 17.

vv. 25–28. Here the connection becomes clear again. Jehovah is still the speaker; he offers Israel a free pardon. Israel, on his side, hesitates to admit his need of it. Jehovah replies by calling upon Israel to mention his supposed meritorious works. But Israel has no such works to mention. On the contrary, as Jehovah reminds him, he has been a sinner from the beginning. This is the true cause of Israel's present humiliation.

[26] **Call to my remembrance**] See last note. Dr. Weir suggests a new interpretation. 'Do not the words rather mean—Only put me in mind of thy relation to me, and of my promises to thee my Servant, recount what I have already done for thee as my Servant, that through my grace thou mayst be justified and saved?' (Comp. the use of the same verb in lxii. 6, lxiii. 7). He thus obtains a closer connection with the last verse: 'Thy sins I will not remember; only thou put me in mind of my promise, and plead with me on that ground.'

[27] **Thy first father**] The sense is disputed. 'Father' may (1) = founder of the nation, as Gen. x. 21, &c.; and the founder of the Jewish nation may be either (a) Abraham (Rashi, Stier, Del, Naeg.), comp. li. 2, lxiii. 16, Matt. iii. 9, or (b) Jacob (Ew., Seinecke, H. Schultz, Kay), comp. lviii. 14, and the common phrase, 'children of Israel.' Of the two, Jacob is much the more probable, for Abraham is too emphatically canonised by the voice of prophecy (see xli. 8) to be described here as the first sinner), whereas certain events in Jacob's life were felt by the prophets to be spots on the fair fame of that patriarch; see Jer. ix. 4, and comp. John i. 47, 'in truth a guileless son of Israel' (spoken with a lofty irony). Or (2) 'father' may be a collective = 'fathers;' comp. Gen. xxxi. 29, 42, 53 (?), Ex. iii. 6, xv. 2, xviii. 4. In this case, the 'fathers' of Israel will be either their ancestors (Ges.), or the leaders of the nation in matters civil

sinned, and thy mediators rebelled against me; [28] therefore I [h]profaned consecrated princes, and delivered up [h] Jacob to the ban, and Israel to reproaches.

[h] Will profane . . . will deliver up, Hebr. pointed text, Targ., Hengst., Stier, Naeg.

(xxii. 21) and religious[1] (Judges xvii. 10, 2 Kings ii. 12). The latter view is taken by Sept. ('your first *fathers*'), and among moderns by Hengst. and Henderson (the high priests collectively from Aaron onwards), but is opposed by the occurrence of a plural in the parallel line. Of less likely conjectures, I will only mention these three. Kimchi, followed by Hitz., Knob., Pusey (*Daniel*, p. 407), thinks of Adam; Vitr. of Uriah, the High Priest in the reign of Ahaz (2 Kings xvi. 10–16), Luzzatto of the sons of Jeshua the High Priest in Ezra's time, who offended by taking foreign wives (Ezra x. 18). The reader will have gathered that I myself agree with Ewald (see above 1 *b*).——**Thy mediators**] The 'interpreters' (so literally), i.e., 'mediators' or 'ambassadors' (the rendering of A. V. in 2 Chron. xxxii. 31), are the prophets and the priests, especially the former. The intercession of a prophet is sometimes described as effectual in the greatest perils of the nation (Ps. cvi. 23, comp. Ex. xxxii. 10–14, 31, 32), though before the Exile, Jeremiah is told that the prayer of the greatest prophets could not then avert the punishment of Judah (xv. 1, comp. xi. 14). Both classes of passages prepare us for the announcement of a higher Mediator, in whom Jehovah is so 'well pleased' that he cannot refuse to accept his intercession (liii. 12). The word rendered 'mediator' (*mēlīç*) is also used of an angel of high rank specially friendly to man, Job xxxiii. 23.——**Rebelled against me**] See Jeremiah's denunciation of the deceitful prophets (Jer. xxiii.).

[28] **I profaned**] i.e., 'treated as holding no relation to me' (Jehovah); so xlvii. 6. (The reading of the pointed text assumes that the profanation is future; comp. on lxiii. 3, 6. So the Targum. See, however, xlii. 25).——**Consecrated princes**] i.e., (1) the chief priests, who are called by this very title in 1 Chron. xxiv. 5; (2) the kings Jehoiakim and Zedekiah, who had received the 'holy oil' (Ps. lxxxix. 20).

CHAPTER XLIV.

Vv. 1–5. But let not the true Israel be discouraged. 'It is a light thing' that he shall pass uninjured through the judgments which are coming upon the world (xliii. 2), and even that the grievous dispersion caused by the various captivities shall have an end. A nobler object of ambition is to be placed before him—the introduction of the heathen nations within the circle of higher spiritual influences. Success is assured to him by one of the grandest Divine promises.

These verses ought to have formed part of the preceding chapter, with which the two first words connect it. The error in the current division of the chapters is owing to the analogy of the opening of chap.

[1] Is it more than a mere coincidence that *āb*, which in Hebrew means (doubtless primarily) 'father,' in Egyptian has the ordinary sense of 'priest?' (See Pierret's *Vocabulaire hiéroglyphique*, s. v.)

xliii. But though there is a similar transition, similarly introduced, at the head of both chapters, there is a manifest break in the discourse at the end of xliv. 5, which makes it entirely misleading to continue the chapter.

[1] But now hear, O Jacob my servant; and Israel, whom I have chosen. [2] Thus saith Jehovah, thy creator, and he that formed thee [a] from the womb, who will help thee [a]; Fear not, my servant Jacob, and thou, Jeshurun, whom I have chosen; [3] for I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and streams upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thy offspring; [4] and they shall shoot up,

[a] (So accents.) Who helpeth thee from the wound, Targ., Vulg., Vitr., Ges.

[2] **Jeshurun**] Rather *Yeshūrūn*. A synonym for Israel. Just as Jerusalem has a second name among her intimates—Ariel (xxix. 1, 2, 7), so Israel has an alternative appellation with his Divine friend. In the earlier name—Israel—the militant character of Jehovah's people was brought prominently forward; in the new name it is the moral attribute of uprightness which is emphasised, corresponding to the new office of teacher conferred upon the spiritual Israel. Thus there are three names for Jehovah's people, Jacob—Israel—Jeshurun, and each represents a separate phase of moral progress.—The meaning of Jeshurun (a derivative of *yāshār* 'upright') is the Upright One.[1] 'Uprightness,' indeed, is the constant burden of the Old Testament:—the ethical character of its religion is the source of its vitality. In Num. xxiii. 10, 'Israel' and 'the upright' are even used synonymously; and a collection of traditions and lyric poems relative to model Israelites received the appellation, 'The Book of the Righteous One' (Auth. Vers. 'the Book of Jasher').[2]—The name Jeshurun only occurs again in the 'Song of Moses' and the 'Blessing of Moses' (Deut. xxxii. 15, xxxiii. 5, 26).——**Whom I have chosen**] The addition illustrates the meaning of the word Jeshurun. It is an 'imputed righteousness (or, uprightness)' which is the ground of Israel's election (Stier). Israel is regarded in the flower, and not in the bud.——**I will pour water**] See on xli. 17, 18, and comp. the transition in Joel ii. 23-28 from the gift of rain to the outpouring of the Spirit.——**I will pour my Spirit**] What it is to have the Spirit of Jehovah we know from xi. 2, 3, and especially from xlii. 1-4. It is to be full of the knowledge and fear of God, and to make the world-wide spread of the true religion the chief object of life. After such a promise has been given in this half-verse, we are bound not to interpret the next verse too narrowly, as if it meant no more than Zech. ix. 17 (*Q. P. B.*).——**Upon thy seed**] And who are the 'seed' of Jacob? See *v.* 5 for the answer.——**As grass**] Grass is generally used as an image of what is transient and soon withers, but now and then of an

[1] Jeshurun is often stated to be a diminutive (e.g., by Ges., Hitz., Ew., Henderson), but on very weak grounds. Are Zebulun and Jedithun diminutives? and would 'my pious little one' (Ewald renders it *Frömmchen*) be in harmony with the fatherly seriousness of Jehovah's language? It is simply a personal name, as Justus Olshausen, Delitzsch, and (in his academical lectures) Dr. Pusey, rightly regard it.

[2] Unless we should, with the Syriac (Josh. x. 13), read *sefer hash-shir*, 'the Song-book.'

[b] as grass between the waters,[b] as poplars by water-courses.
[5] This one shall say, 'I am Jehovah's,' and that one shall celebrate the name of Jacob, and that one shall [c]mark on his hand[c] 'Jehovah's,' and use for a title the name of Israel.

[b] So Sept., Lowth, Ew.—Hebr. text, Amidst the grass.
[c] So Sept., Lowth, Hitz., Knob.—Write with his hand, Vitr., Ges., Ew., Del.

abundant growth, as in Job v. 25, Ps. lxxii. 16.—The Sept. reading completes the parallelism, and restores symmetry to the paragraph. ——**As poplars**] Not 'willows'; see Wetzstein in Del.'s commentary on the passage. The same word as in xv. 7.——**Water-courses**] Artificially conducted streams.

[5] The stunted spiritual condition even of the few believers in Israel shall be remedied (*vv.* 3, 4). But how? This is explained in the next verse. It is not merely the 'seed' of believers in a natural sense to which the outpouring of the Spirit is guaranteed (*v.* 3), but the whole body of believers in the coming Messianic age. 'God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham' (Matt. iii. 9). Comp. on xlv. 25.——**This one shall say . . .**] (Obs., the first and the third clauses correspond, the second and the fourth.) The prophet is so full of the idea of a comprehensive Church of Jehovah, that without any warning he transports us into the midst of the thronging Jewish proselytes.[1] The description reminds us somewhat of Ps. lxxxvii. 4, 5 (already compared by Vitr.), where the representatives of the heathen nations are described as being born anew in Zion. Comp. also Zech. viii. 23 (referred to by 'many' in Ibn Ezra's time).—— **Celebrate . . .**] See on xii. 4. ——**Mark on his hand**] 'If a slave runs away from his master, and, taking sanctuary at this shrine, gives himself up to the god, and receives certain sacred marks upon his person, whosoever his master may be, he cannot lay hand upon him' (Herod. ii. 113 Rawl., comp. vii. 233). See also Lucian, *De dea syr.* 59. Delitzsch, from whom I differ with regret, objects to this rendering that it implies a contradiction between the prophet and a Levitical prohibition, which runs, 'Ye shall not print any marks upon you' (Lev. xix. 28). But (not to open the critical question of the date of the Levitical legislation in its present form), it may be answered 1, That the Levitical prohibition refers to heathenish tattooing (comp. the context in Lev. *l. c.*, and Deut. xiv. 1), and 2, that there is no occasion to interpret the words of the text literally. In fact, there are not a few passages in which the Biblical writers use the equivalent of the phrase which is objected to in a metaphorical sense, either with regard to the hand (so in four places), or to the forehead, or to the whole body. For instance, 'I bear the marks of Jesus in my body' (Gal. vi. 17). 'Mark a cross upon the foreheads of the men who sigh and groan over all the abominations which take place in their midst' (Ezek. ix. 4, so Rev. vii. 3, ix. 4, xiii. 16, xiv. 1, 9). 'And it shall be for a sign unto thee upon thine hand, and for a memorial between thine eyes' (Ex. xiii. 9, which is not to be violently harmonized with Deut. vi. 8). 'Behold, I have

[1] It has been doubted whether Judaism can be called a proselytising religion. (See Prof. Max Müller's *Lecture on Missions.*) We should certainly expect it *à priori* to be so; such fervent monotheism could not help endeavouring to extend its sway. The words of the above revelation, moreover, certainly regard it as being such, for converts imply missionaries. Yet the evidence for the post-Captivity periods is, I admit, conflicting.

vv. 6–28.—*Contents.*—Jehovah, the God of prophecy, contrasted with the manufactured gods of the deluded heathen. A fresh appeal to prophecy, culminating in the prediction of the rebuilding of Jerusalem through the favour of Cyrus.

6 Thus saith Jehovah, the King of Israel, and his Goel
Jehovah Sabáoth; I am the first and I am the last, and
beside me there is no God. 7 And who calleth as I, (let him
declare it and expound it unto me,) since I placed [d]the
people of antiquity[d]? and future things, and things that shall

[d] The everlasting people, Ew., Naeg.

graven thee upon the palms of my hands' (Isa. xlix. 16). It is true that this way of speaking is based upon a heathenish custom.[1] But this is no valid objection, as neither the religion of the Old Testament nor that of the New is that 'exclusive and unsympathetic faith' which Positivists represent it to be. —Alt. rend. means 'subscribe to a solemn form of dedication to Jehovah,' such as was entered into by the chief men of the Jews in the time of Nehemiah (Neh. ix., x.). See crit. note.——**Use for a title . . .**] 'Israel' or 'Son of Israel' shall be regarded henceforth as the most honourable title which a man can bear.—It is a peculiar kind of title which is referred to, analogous to the Roman *cognomen*, and still more closely to the *kunya* of men of distinction among the Arabs, which generally has a political or religious significance (e.g., Salâkh-eddîn, i.e., 'salus religionis'). The verb used in the Hebrew (*kinnâh*) is radically the same; from it is derived in later Hebrew *kinnûy* (i.e., a cognomen or agnomen, though not specially in an honourable sense). It occurs again in the same sense in xlv. 4, and in Job xxxii. 21, 22, in that of 'to flatter' (Auth. Vers. 'give flattering titles')[2].

6 Here begins one of the principal sections of the prophecy. It is prefaced by a short and simple but majestic proclamation of Jehovah concerning His being. **I am the first and I am the last**] 'I am before all things, and shall still endure though all creation pass away.' So xlviii. 12; comp. the slightly different form of expression in xli. 4, and Rev. i. 8, 17, xxii. 13. 'The last' has here the same sense as in Job xix. 25 (see *Q. P. B.*).

7 The eternity of Jehovah involves His sole ability to foretell the future.——**And who calleth . . .**] Or, 'who is wont to call' (i.e., prophesy, xl. 2). 'And' is explanatory. The prophecies of Jehovah (i.e., inspired by Jehovah) reach back to the 'placing' of **the people of antiquity . . .** It is doubted whether the latter phrase means the Jews (Vitr., Ges., Kay, Weir), or the first inhabitants of the world (Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, Hitz., Del.). Dr. Weir thinks that 'the comparison of *v.* 8 shows that Jehovah is here appealing to the long-continued experience of his people in the past; and therefore the point indicated in "since I placed, &c.," is the call of Abraham.' In support of this view he very aptly quotes the expression in lxiii. 11, 'The days of old (or of antiquity), of Moses.' If, however, the Jews are to be brought in, it seems better to adopt Ewald's rendering, 'the everlasting people,' with reference

[1] See, with regard to Polynesia (where primitive life has retained more of its freshness than elsewhere), Waitz, *Anthropologie der Naturvölker*, vi. 36, 37.

[2] See, besides the late-Hebrew Lexicon of Buxtorf or Levy, Ewald's *Lehrbuch der hebr. Sprache*, § 271, 273.

come, let them announce. [8] Shudder ye not, neither be ye terrified; have I not long since caused thee to hear it, and announced it? indeed ye are my witnesses: is there a God besides me? (Nay,) and there is no Rock; I know of none. [9] They who fashion images are all of them chaos, and their objects of delight cannot profit, and their witnesses are without sight and without knowledge, in order that they may be ashamed. [10] Who fashioneth a god, and casteth an image —to no profit? [11] Behold, all its associates shall be ashamed,

to the 'everlasting covenant' (Ex. xxxi. 16), the 'everlasting priesthood' (Ex. xl. 15), and the everlasting kingdom (2 Sam. vii. 13, 16), promised to the people of Israel. Such a description of the Jews is fine and poetical, and not out of harmony with the context (see Stier). It suggests the everlastingness of God's people, in opposition to the proximate fall of the idolatrous nations, as arising naturally out of its relation to prophecy and to 'the everlasting God' (xl. 28). But I cannot help thinking with Del. that, if Israel had been meant, it would have been more directly mentioned. Our prophet, as we have seen already, takes a singularly wide view of the course of history, and the comparison of a passage in the Book of Job (so rich in phraseological and doctrinal parallels), where the manner of life of the antediluvian men is called 'the way of antiquity' (A. V., 'the old way'), confirms the view adopted above. I suppose, then, the Divine speaker to affirm that the succession of prophets goes back to the creation of man—a statement which agrees with the Book of Genesis, and seems to be repeated in xlviii. 16 (see note).——**Placed** implies that the creation of man had a purpose, viz., the same to which all prophecy points—the conscious and intelligent glorification of God. ——**People** is here used in the same sense as in xlii. 5.——**Things that shall come**] Not merely things pretended as future, but such as shall actually come to pass (Naeg.).

[8] **Shudder ye not**] Viz., at the convulsions of the Asiatic nations. ——**I know of none**] Elsewhere it is the insult to His glory which the Divine pleader emphasizes; here the injury done by idolaters to themselves. If there were another Rock of Ages, Jehovah would not complain; but as his being is unique, it pains him that men will not have him for a God (Luther and Stier).

[9] **Chaos**] See on xxiv. 10.—— **Their objects of delight**] In a religious sense, as lxiv. 11, Lam. i. 10. Comp. i. 29.——**Their witnesses**] i.e., the witnesses on behalf of the idols—the heathen, as opposed to Jehovah's witnesses—the Jews (*v.* 8).——**That they may be ashamed**] The consequence of the action is described as if it had formed part of the intention of the agent; comp. vi. 9, xxviii. 13, xxx. 1.

[10] **Who fashioneth a God**] An image can doubtless be produced by art, but who can think of fashioning an image into a god? 'Quis nisi demens' (Grotius).

[11] **All its associates**] A *khābhēr* is a member of a *khébher*, i.e., a company, guild, or society (e.g., as in the Mishna, of the guild of the Pharisees); comp. Hos. vi. 9, where the priests of the kingdom of Israel are called a *khébher*. Here the prophet means the worshippers of the idol, who together formed a kind of guild, and by partaking of the sacrificial meals were brought into a mystical union with the god whom they worshipped; comp. Hos. iv. 17, 'Ephraim is (*khabhúr*) in association with idols,' 1 Cor. x.

and as for the craftsmen—they are of men. Let them all of them assemble, come forward, shudder, be ashamed at once. 12 [e]The smith sharpeneth an axe,[e] and worketh in the coals, and with hammers be fashioneth it; he worketh it with his powerful arm; he is hungry also, and hath no strength; he drinketh no water, and is faint. 13 The carpenter stretcheth out a line, he sketcheth it with [f]a sharp tool[f]; he finisheth it with planes, and marketh it out with compasses; and maketh it like the human figure, like the beauty of man, to dwell in the house. 14 [g]He heweth him down[g] cedars, and taketh the ilex and the oak, and [h]fixeth his choice on[h] trees of the forest; he planteth an ash, and the rain maketh it grow; 15 and it serveth for men to burn, he taketh of them and warmeth himself; also he kindleth a fire, and baketh bread; also he worketh it into a god, and boweth down; he maketh it into an image, and worshippeth it. 16 Half thereof he burneth in the fire; with half thereof he eateth flesh; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied; also he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I [i]feel the flame; 17 and the remainder of it he maketh into a god, into his image: he

[e] So Sept., Pesh., Del., Weir.—Hebr. text, The smith an axe.
[f] Red chalk, Kimchi, Vitr.
[g] So Ew. (changing a letter).—Hebr. text, To hew down (or, possibly, He prepareth to hew down, Del.).
[h] Reareth him some, Ew.
[i] Lit, see.

20, 'I would not have you become associates with demons.' With regard to this mystical union, see further on i. 21.——**They are of men**] i.e., of human origin, and how should men make their maker?——**Let them . . . assemble**] Let the members of the guild combine to defend their head.

12, 13 An ironical description of the laborious process of 'making a god,' first of all of wood, and then of iron.

13 **Stretcheth out a line**] i.e., upon the block of wood.——**Like the human figure**] Foolishly forgetting that man was made in the image of the true God.——**In the house**] i.e., either in a temple or in a private house.

14 The prophet resumes the history of the wooden idol. The mode of production of the metal is a mystery; iron comes from 'a path which no eagle knoweth' (Job xxviii. 7). But the idol of wood can be traced farther back. Nature itself has been visibly at work, or rather—strange irony of circumstance!—the true God Himself, who 'sendeth his rain' equally upon believers and misbelievers. The description 'moves retrogressively' (Del.); the mention of the trees suggests that of their planting. On the trees mentioned, see Del.'s note.——**Fixeth his choice**] Rendering as xli. 10.

16 One-half of the wood the man uses to make a fire for cooking and for warming himself.——**Half thereof**, in the second line, does not mean the other half of the wood (as is plain from *v.* 17: see also *v.* 19). The words (or rather, in the Hebr., word) are only repeated to make out a second member to the verse.

worshippeth it and boweth down; and he prayeth unto it and saith, Rescue me, for thou art my god. [18] They have no knowledge and no understanding, for their eyes are daubed so that they cannot see, and their hearts so that they cannot consider. [19] And he taketh it not to his heart, he hath neither knowledge nor understanding to say, Half of it I have burned in the fire, and I have also baked bread over the coals thereof, I roasted flesh and ate; and the residue thereof shall I make an abomination? the produce of a tree shall I worship? [20] He followeth after ashes; a deluded heart hath turned him aside, and he cannot rescue himself, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

[21] Remember these things, O Jacob; and Israel, for thou art my servant: I have formed thee, thou art a servant unto me; O Israel, thou [k]canst not be forgotten of me.[k] [22] I have blotted out as a mist thy rebellions, and as clouds thy sins: return unto me, for I have released thee. [23] Ring out, ye heavens, for Jehovah hath done nobly; shout, ye depths of the earth; burst out, ye mountains, into a ringing sound;

[k] Shalt (or, shouldest) not forget me, Sept., Pesh., Targ., Vulg., Rashi, Hitz.

[18] Whence does this folly proceed? From judicial hardness of heart. Metaphorically, **their eyes are daubed**; comp. on vi. 10.

[20] The idolater is so wrapped up in his delusion that he never thinks of examining the grounds of his hopes.——**He followeth after ashes**] Comp., 'Ephraim followeth after wind, and chaseth the east wind' (Hos. xii. 1). 'Ashes,' i.e., that which is vain, unreal, disappointing.

[21] A fresh section begins here, introduced by an admonition. Israel, attached by such special ties to Jehovah, should **remember these things** (i.e., the folly of idolatry, comp. xlvi. 8).——**And Israel**] i.e., 'and remember this, O Israel.'——**Canst not be forgotten . . .**] As Jehovah's people foolishly complains (xl. 27, xlix. 14). Against alt. rend. see Del.

[22-23] Jehovah has already proved (or is on the point of proving) his fidelity to his covenant by pardoning and redeeming (or rather releasing) Israel. Pardon and release are but two sides of one and the same deliverance. 'There is no peace' (even externally) 'for the ungodly,' and those who would return to Zion must first return to Jehovah. But it is Jehovah who makes the first advances. He calls for conversion, on the ground that **I have released thee**] 'The Israel of God' cannot perish; the only question which remains is one for man's free will to settle, viz., the numbers of those who shall constitute it.

[23] Appeal for sympathy to heaven and earth; comp. xlix. 13.——**Hath done nobly**] Lit., 'hath done.' Used pregnantly as in lxiv. 3 (4), Jer. iv. 17, and probably Ps. xxii. 32 (31). **Ye depths of the earth**] Heaven above is contrasted with Sheól beneath (as in vii. 11). To have introduced the word Sheól would have marred the antithesis; hence the prophet uses a synony-

thou forest, and every tree therein! for Jehovah hath redeemed Jacob, and beautifieth himself with Israel. [24] Thus saith Jehovah, thy Goel, and he that formed thee from the womb; I am Jehovah, the maker of everything, that stretched forth the heavens alone, that spread forth the earth—[1] who was with me?[1] [25] that bringeth to nought the signs of the praters, and maketh the diviners mad, that turneth wise men backward, and proveth their knowledge to be folly, [26] that maketh his servant's word to stand, and accomplisheth the counsel

[1] Or, Who beside me? This is the reading of the letters of the text. The vowel-points assume the reading, By myself.

mous phrase, the meaning of which was familiar to his readers. For a similar reason St. Paul says that Christ descended, not *εἰς ᾅδην*, but *εἰς τὰ κατώτερα τῆς γῆς* (Eph. iv. 9).—A difficulty has been felt by some critics in admitting that Sheól could thus be called upon to rejoice; see Ps. vi. 5, lxxxviii. 12. Hence Calv. and Vitr. suppose 'the depths (or, lower parts) of the earth' are the valleys and plains as opposed to the mountains; and Del. arbitrarily distinguishes Sheól from 'the interior of the earth, with its caves, its pits, and its deep abysses.' But there is one argument conclusive against these theories, viz., that wherever this and similar phrases occur (see crit. note) there is always an implied reference to Sheól: Vitr. has in vain attempted to disprove this. —The difficulty of these critics may be met in two ways: either, with Stier and Hahn, by comparing xxvi. 19, where some, at least, of the dwellers in Sheól are called upon to rejoice, or, better, (since this view is not favoured by the context, and is opposed by xlix. 13, where the appeal is made to the heavens, *the earth*, and the mountains,) by supposing that Sheól is not here referred to as the abode of the departed, but as a part of the material world. The passage is simply a poetical apostrophe, like 'Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth,' though I would not deny that there may be an allusion to the regeneration of which heaven and earth are to be the subjects (lxv. 17).——**Ye mountains**] The mountains are introduced to make a second antithesis with 'the depths of the earth.' In Ps. xcvi. 11 their place is taken by the sea. Comp. the striking apostrophe to the mountains (by themselves) in Mic. vi. 2.——**Beautifieth himself**] So xlix. 3, lx. 21, lxi. 3. Comp. 'Thou shalt be a crown of beauty in the hand of Jehovah, &c.,' lxii. 3.

[24] The prophet gathers up his strength for a fresh flight. The God of creation and of prophecy has already selected His instrument for Israel's liberation.—— **Who was with me?**] As my counsellor (xl. 13). This, as the more peculiar reading, and the more easily altered, should have the preference. Comp. Job ix. 8, 'Who *alone* spread out the heavens.'

[25] **The signs of the praters**] i.e., the agencies of the heathen soothsayers, specially those of Babylon (xlvii. 13).

[26] **His servant**] The context shows that 'servant' is here a synonym for prophet;' comp. Mic. iii. 7, 8, where the prophetic writer is opposed to the deceitful prophets (comp. *v.* 25). Isaiah is expressly called Jehovah's servant in xx. 3; the Egyptians, too, according to Brugsch, called their prophets by a term meaning 'servant of God'

of his messengers, that saith of Jerusalem, Let her be inhabited, and of the cities of Judah, Let them be built, and her desolate places will I raise up; [27] that saith to the flood, Be thou wasted, and thy streams will I dry up; [28] that saith of Cyrus, My shepherd, and all my pleasure shall he accom-

(*ḥon nyter*).[1] Calv. and Ges. think 'servant' is here used collectively for 'servants,' i.e., prophets. But in this case should we not expect 'messenger' in the parallel line, on the analogy of xlii. 19? It is, I think, the prophetic writer who is meant (Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, Vitr., Naeg., Kay); though Hitzig's reference of the phrase to Jeremiah (see Jer. xxx.–xxxiii., l., li) is certainly ingenious. — **Counsel**] i.e., prediction (comp. xli. 28, 'counsellor,' i.e., 'prophet'). — **His messengers**] i.e., the prophets generally.

[27] **The flood**] i.e., the Euphrates. Similar predictions in xi. 15, Jer. l. 38, li. 36; comp. Rev. xvi. 12.

[28] **That saith of Cyrus**] 'The mention of Cyrus by name is here the seal to the truth and consistency of the whole message.' We may adopt these words of Prof. Birks, though not quite in the sense in which he uses them. The prophet does not say, 'Behold, a child shall be born, Cyrus by name, and he shall be my shepherd' (comp. the prediction of Josiah's birth, 1 Kings xiii. 2), but, assuming the existence of a person named Cyrus, predicts that he, and no scion of the Davidic house (as the Jews may well have supposed) was the chosen instrument of Israel's deliverance. Here, as in the greater part of chaps. xl.–lxvi., the prophet incontrovertibly occupies the standing-ground of a Jewish exile in Babylon. It is not surprising that a Roman Catholic critic[2] (Dr. P. Schegg) should pronounce the whole verse to be a later explanatory addition, and the words (or rather word) 'to Cyrus' (*lkōresh*) in xlv. 1 to have the same origin, or that Dr. Plumptre (following Hengstenberg) should have tried to show that the name of Cyrus may have come to Isaiah by natural means. The theory of the former critic seems to me as purely arbitrary as any fancy of the older rationalists; the attempt of the latter is perfectly justifiable, and I cannot but sympathise deeply with it, as it springs from a well-founded objection to the mechanical theory of prophetic revelations. Dr. Plumptre's explanation[3] is perfect, if only his facts are sound. If it can be shown 1, that Cyrus was an old titular name of the Persian kings (like Pharaoh for the kings of Egypt); 2, that it signifies 'the sun;' and 3, that there were communications between Judah and Persia in Isaiah's time, then it is a very probable supposition that Isaiah would hear of the name, and connect it with the Divine revelations. But I fear the two former positions (not to criticise the third) cannot any longer be maintained. The meaning of 'the sun' for Cyrus rests ultimately upon a statement of Plutarch[4]; it was long ago questioned by our countryman Gataker, and, as Lassen and Spiegel argue, is philologically untenable.[5] It is admitted indeed that the name Kurus

[1] Brugsch, *Hieroglyphische Grammatik*, p. 106.

[2] Referred to in Strachey's *Jewish History and Politics*, pp. 358–9.

[3] *Biblical Studies* (Lond. 1870), p. 195. The supposed analogy of Pharaoh, referred to by Dr. Plumptre, is untenable. Egyptologists are now agreed that it means, not 'the sun,' but 'Great House' (comp. the phrases 'the Court,' 'the Sublime Porte').

[4] Plutarch mentions it at the beginning of his life of Artaxerxes. Most, after Gesenius, claim for it the authority of Ctesias, but this can only be done inferentially.

[5] Gataker, *Adversaria*, ed. 1659, col. 659; Lassen, *Zeitschr. f. d. Kunde des Mor-*

plish, even in saying of Jerusalem, Let her be built, and of the temple, Let thy foundations be laid.

was given to an Indian mythic hero, who was probably also a hero of the Persian mythology, and after whom Cyrus may very possibly have been named. But it cannot be supposed that a Hebrew prophet would have heard of this mythic name, or regarded it as significant for the history of Israel. ——**Cyrus**] Hebr. *kôresh* (the last vowel pronounced very short; the word is a so-called 'segolate' in form).——**My shepherd**] i.e., no mere ordinary ruler, but one appointed by me to shepherd my people Israel; comp. Ezek. xxxiv. 11, &c., and see above on xl. 11.—Josephus makes this interesting statement:—'Now this became known to Cyrus by his reading the book which Esaias left behind him of his prophecy; for this man said that God had spoken thus to him in secret: My will is that Cyrus, &c. This was prophesied by Esaias one hundred and forty years before the demolition of the temple. When therefore Cyrus had read this, and marvelled at the divinity, a kind of *impulse* (comp. on xlv. 13 *b*) and ambition seized upon him to fulfil what was so written' (Jos. *Ant.* xii. 1, 2).

Note on 'That saith to Cyrus' (xliv. 28), and 'when thou hast not known me' (xlv. 4).

Two illustrations of these passages from an Assyrian source seem worth noticing.[1]

It has been observed above that the prophetic writer assumes, rather than predicts, the existence of Cyrus, that he omits to mention by how many years (if any) his announcements preceded the birth of the Deliverer. His interest is in fact wholly absorbed by the momentous enterprise which has been confided to Cyrus. The following quotation from the Annals of Assurbanipal (king of Assyria from 667 to 626 B.C.) supplies a contrast rather than a parallel to this studious reticence. It relates to an event of special interest, both on its own account and for its connection with the fourteenth chapter of Genesis, viz., the raid of the Elamitish king, Kudur-nankhundi, into Babylonia. Assurbanipal appears to state that his name, and the high religious duty committed to him, had been predicted more than a thousand years before. These are his words:—'Nana, who 1635 years had been desecrated, had gone, and dwelt | in Elam, a place not appointed to her; | and in those days, she and the gods her fathers | proclaimed my name to the dominion of the earth. | The return of her divinity she entrusted to me thus: "Assurbanipal, from the midst of Elam (wicked), | bring me out, and cause me to enter into Bitanna." | The will commanded by their divinity, which from days remote | they had uttered, again they spoke to later people.'

This is a good specimen of the extravagance of fictitious prophecy,

genlandes, vi. 153; Spiegel, *Beiträge zur vergleichenden Sprachforschung*, i. 33. I am sorry that Prof. Birks (2nd ed. of *Commentary*, 1878,), and even Dr. Kay (1875), should have given their support to a thoroughly antiquated explanation.

[1] *History of Assurbanipal*, translated by George Smith (Lond. 1871), pp. 234–5 and p. 4.

and illustrates the reasonable demand of the prophet in xliii. 9, 'Let them bring forth their witnesses, that they may be justified.'

The second is of value, as showing how familiar the idea of predestination was to another Semitic nation besides the Jewish. It illustrates, not only the passage quoted above (xlv. 4), but also xlix. 1, where of 'the Servant' it is said, 'from my mother's lap (or, womb) hath he made mention of my name.' The same king Assurbanipal states at the solemn opening of his Annals, that the gods '*in the body of his mother* have made (him) to rule Assyria.'

CHAPTER XLV.

Contents:—The achievements of Cyrus; the sinful murmurings of Israel rebuked; then, returning to the bright theme of restoration, the conversion of the southern nations and of those who escape in the judgment on the heathen world.

vv. 1–8.—Arrived at this culminating point of his first strain of prophecy, the writer lingers awhile on the motives of the Divine favour to Cyrus. Three of these are mentioned—(1) That he might be led to acknowledge the true God, (2) that Israel might be liberated, and (3) that the world might be converted from false religions. Then follows a short song of praise.

[1] Thus saith Jehovah to his anointed, to Cyrus, whom I have grasped by his right hand, to bring down before him nations, and to ungird the loins of kings, to open before him

[1] **To his anointed**] LXX. τῷ χριστῷ μου; Vulg., *christo meo*. Cyrus is the only non-Jewish king called Jehovah's 'anointed one' (Hebr. *mâshîakh* = Messiah), the only non-Davidic ruler *Dei gratiâ* (unless Nebuchadnezzar be thought an exception, see Jer. xxvii. 6, xliii. 10). It is a conjecture of Ewald's that the phrase involves a rebuke to those of the exiles who, on the ground of the ancient prophecies, were expecting an Israelitish deliverer. Against this it may be urged 1, That the ideal king of the future is nowhere in the prophetic canon called 'the Anointed One;' 2, That it is but the least important of the functions of him whom we, following the traditional interpretation of Dan. ix. 26, call the Messiah (or the Messianic king), which is here allotted to Cyrus (see *I. C. A.*, p. 166). It would be a more plausible conjecture that the prophet was looking forward to an independent Israelitish empire to be set up by Cyrus, for in *v.* 14 he speaks of captives from neighbouring countries coming to Jerusalem, and later on of kings being the 'nursing-fathers' and humble vassals of Zion (xlix. 23). The prophet *may* have understood this; but believers in revelation will not admit that the prophet's view of the meaning of his revelation is decisive. The fulfilment of predictions depends on moral conditions, and those which are yet unfulfilled may yet be realized ἐν τῇ συντελείᾳ τοῦ αἰῶνος.—**To ungird the loins . . .**] i.e., to disarm, the weapons being carried at the girdle or belt; comp. Ps. xlv. 3, Judges xviii. 11. So 'to

folding-doors, and that the gates may not be shut: [2] I will go before thee, and will make swelling places plain; folding-doors of brass I will break in pieces, and bars of iron will I cut in sunder; [3] and I will give thee treasures of darkness, and hidden things of secret places, that thou mayest acknowledge that I am Jehovah, I that call thee by thy name, the God of Israel. [4] For the sake of Jacob my servant, and of Israel mine elect, I have called unto thee by thy name, I have titled

gird,' *v.* 5, means 'to arm.'——**Folding-doors**] i.e., those of the cities which Cyrus attacks.

[2] **Swelling places**] Milton's 'tumid hills.'——**Doors of brass**] Babylon had 'a hundred gates, all of brass, with brazen lintels and side-posts' (Herod. i. 179, comp. 180). 'The way in which the city was treated would lead us to suppose that its acquisition cannot have cost the conqueror either much time or much loss . . . it is certain that the vast walls and gates were left untouched' (Grote, *History of Greece*, iv. 287). Prosaic persons may, if they please, point to this as an instance of the non-fulfilment of prophecy.——**Treasures of darkness**] Comp. the description of Babylon as 'abundant in treasures' (Jer. li. 13) and as πολύχρυσος (Æsch. *Persæ*, 53).——**That thou mayest acknowledge**] See on xli. 25–29.

[4] **For the sake of Jacob**. . .] 'En magnam sententiam vatis! Fata imperiorum et regnorum mundi à Deo disponi cum respectu ad ecclesiam.' Vitringa. A true exposition, though the prophet clearly instructs us elsewhere, that not only is Cyrus for the sake of Israel, but Israel for the sake of those who are capable of 'faith' among the Gentiles.——**I have titled thee**] viz., with the honourable epithets, 'My shepherd,' 'My anointed.' It is the same very peculiar verb which we met with in xliv. 5 (see note).——**When thou hast not known me**] This might mean, 'When thou wast not a worshipper of mine, and hadst no special claim on my consideration.' (So Calv., Vitr., Knob.) But in that case, should we not expect the sequel to run, 'that *thou* mayest know' (or acknowledge)? At any rate, it enriches the context to explain the phrase on the analogy of xlix. 1, 'From the bowels of my mother hath he made mention of my name.' (So Del., Naeg., Kay.) For Cyrus may in a manner be called the twin-brother of 'Jehovah's Servant.'

[6] **That men might know** . . .] 'Several important movements in the direction of monotheism (notably, the Pythagorean . . .) had their origin about the time of Cyrus' (Kay). Let us frankly admit, however, that the prophet antedates the glorious prospect revealed to him. He would certainly not have been satisfied with 'monotheistic movements.'

[7] **That form light** . . .] 'The alternation of day and night is Jehovah's ordinance; so also is the alternation of light and darkness in Providence, of peace and war, of success and misfortune, of good and evil. Comp. Lam. iii. 38' (Dr. Weir). See also liv. 16, Am. iii. 6.—Saadya (as reported by Kimchi) found in this passage a protest against Persian dualism,[1] and the view has been accepted without remonstrance by the latest critics. No doubt it harmonizes well with the prevalent fancy for 'tendencies,' and, if the prophecy were not of so early a date, it would be impossible to deny a degree of plausibility to the theory. If, however, dualism

[1] Lagarde and Gustave d'Eichthal have discvoered a similar protest in Gen. i. 3–5.

thee, when thou hast not known me. [5] I am Jehovah, and there is none else; besides me there is no God; I girded thee when thou knewest me not; [6] that men might know from the rising of the sun and from the setting thereof that there is none beside me—I am Jehovah and there is none else—[7] that form light and create darkness, that make welfare and create calamity,—I am Jehovah, the maker of all these things.

[8] Shower, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let [a] them bear the fruit of salvation,[a] and [b] let righteousness shoot forth [b] at once: I, Jehovah, have created it.

[a] So Naeg.—Salvation blossom, Hitz., Ew., Del., Weir.
[b] So all versions.—Let it (the earth) cause righteousness to shoot forth, Hitz., Kay.

is referred to at all (which I doubt, the language of the prophet being so general), it is rather the primitive dualism of the Babylonian religion (on which see Lenormant's *La magie chez les Chaldéens*). As for the earlier Persian religion, the inscriptions of the Achæmenidæ (e.g., that of Darius at Nakshi Rustam)[1] are as guiltless of dualism as our prophet himself. But the form of the prophecy is rather chosen with regard to its application to Israel. The 'light' and the 'welfare' are that happy state to which Israel was to be restored through (but not by) Cyrus; the 'darkness' and the 'calamity,' the misery and woe of the Exile (comp. xlii. 7).——**Welfare**] Or, peace (lit., wholeness). ——**Calamity**] Lit., evil; comp. xlvii. 11, lvii. 1, and Jerome's note here. [One of the earliest Jewish 'Benedictions' is based upon this passage. It omits the word 'calamity,' however, because, according to the esoteric doctrine, nothing that God creates is evil.]

[8] The appearance of the Shepherd of Jehovah, and the thought of the blessings of which he is the medium, inspires the prophet with a joyous strain of psalmody.——**Shower, ye heavens, from above . . .**] The form of expression is borrowed from the Eastern religions, according to which the fertility of the earth is owing to the impregnating influence of heaven. See the parallel passages, Ps. lxxxv. 11, Hos. ii. 21, 22.——**Righteousness**] It is doubted whether 'righteousness' is here substantially the same as salvation (viewed in its relation to the covenant-God), or that human righteousness in which salvation, on its moral side, consists. The former is certainly the case in xlvi. 13, and is in more complete accordance with the usage of the prophet; comp. also li. 5, 6, 8; lvi. 1, lix. 17, lxi. 10, 11, lxii. 1.——**Let them bear . . .**] The suppressed subject is 'heaven and earth' (Naeg.). —— **Have created it**] As xli. 20.

vv. 9–13. The sure promise of Jehovah is contrasted with the little faith of Israel, who murmurs, not at the nationality of the Deliverer (as Ewald represents), but at the tardy advent of the deliverance. The prophet

[1] See *Records of the Past*, v. 151–153.

9 Woe unto him that striveth with him that formed him,
a potsherd among potsherds of the ground!
Doth the clay say to him that formeth it, What makest thou?
or thy work, He hath no hands?
10 Woe unto him that saith to a father What begettest thou?
or to a woman, What bringest thou forth?
11 Thus saith Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel, and

rejoins, 'Woe unto him, who, though made of earth, and with no intrinsic superiority over others of his race, presumes to find fault with his Maker, and to criticise providential arrangements.' It is one of the most decisive Biblical assertions of the Divine sovereignty. For the image of the potter, comp. xxix. 16, lxiv. 8, and especially Jer. xviii. 1–6, xix. 1, 10, 11, Rom. ix. 20–24. It is extremely characteristic, and is evidently based on the account in Gen. ii. 7.——**A potsherd among potsherds of the ground**] 'Among,' or 'like'; lit., 'with.'—The rendering, however, is only probable. The ideas of 'among' and 'like' are but loosely expressed by the preposition 'with,' and there is the further difficulty (pointed out by Dr. Weir) of giving the same preposition (*'eth*) a different sense in two successive clauses. Calvin remarks, 'Id est quod vulgò dicere solemus, *Que chacun se prenne à son pareil.* Testa cum testis contendat.' But this ellipsis of 'contendat' is very harsh.——**What makest thou**?] Implying, Thou makest me amiss.——**He hath no hands**] i.e., he has no power (comp. Josh. viii. 20, Ps. lxxvi. 5); or, better in this connection, no skill. Calvin compares the French phrase, *mettre la dernière main.*

10 Another figure expressing the discontent which fixes itself on 'second causes.' A child expostulates with its parents for having brought so weak, or deformed, or ugly a being into the world.——**What begettest thou**?] It is not said Why begettest thou? (as Job iii. 11, 12, x. 18,) but What, either as a question of anger, or an exclamation of scorn——**To a woman**] Perhaps to emphasize the speaker's want of natural affection (Stier).

11 Jehovah here speaks without figure. 'Will ye be so presumptuous as to catechise me on the future, or to dictate to me on my providential arrangements for my people?' Stier mentions this view as Calvin's (though I do not find it in the 1551 edition of Calvin's Isaiah), but justly asks how it can be reconciled with the imperative in the first clause. Certainly it cannot be, if the text-reading be correct. But is it possible to translate the text-reading in such a way as to satisfy at once the requirements of the context and those of linguistic usage? Wherever the Hebrew verb (*çivvah*) is used elsewhere in this construction, and with the sense ascribed to it of 'giving over to one's keeping and direction,' the subject of the verb is invariably Jehovah, or some superior (see e.g., 1 Sam. xiii. 14, xxv. 30, &c.). It seems very doubtful whether the words before us can be used of man committing any object to the care of God. This seems an insurmountable difficulty, for it is clear from the context that we have no right to suppose the language of the prophet to be ironical (Dr. Weir).—A very slight alteration is required to reconcile the difference between sense and grammar, viz., to suppose, with Dr. Weir, that a letter (*Ṯâv*) which ought to

he that formed him, Concerning the things to come [c] will ye question me [c]? concerning my children and the work of my hands [d] will ye lay commands upon me? [d] 12 It was I that made the earth and created the men upon it; my hands that stretched out the heavens, and upon all their host do I lay commands. 13 It was I who stirred him up in righteousness, and all his ways will I make level; he shall build my city, and mine exiled ones shall he send home, not for price, and not for reward, saith Jehovah Sabáoth.

[c] Text has, Ask (or, question) me. (See below).
[d] Most render (or paraphrase), Leave me to care. (See below).

have been repeated has dropped out—no uncommon phenomenon in the Masoretic text! The appropriateness of the rendering thus obtained is self-evident. **Concerning my children**] A deep saying. Jehovah implies at once that it must be well with those whom he regards as his children, and that those who murmur against him tacitly renounce the privilege of sonship.

12 The absurdity of such presumptuous conduct, the subject of criticism being One who is the creator and commander of the universe.——**All their host**] i.e., the stars, not the angels (Baudissin); see on xl. 26.——**Do I lay commands**] Or, 'Did I lay commands' (i.e., 'I commanded them into existence;' comp. xlviii. 5). This is not unsuitable to the context. But the analogy of xlviii. 13 favours the rendering adopted. Comp. Josh. x. 12, Ps. civ. 4.

13 **Who stirred him up . . .**] The same phrases occur in xli. 25, xlii. 6, xlv. 2.——**Not for price**] Not from earthly motives, but from an irresistible Divine impulse. So Josephus (see on xliv. 28) ascribes the action of Cyrus to ὁρμή τις.—It is quite conceivable that a lofty spirit like that of Cyrus may have at once obeyed the dictates of religious sympathy with the Jews. The baser earthly motives ('not for price' = 'not for money,' lii. 3) are at any rate excluded in his case. How far his resolution may have been confirmed by a consideration of the usefulness of such a faithful advanced guard at the border of Egypt, it is impossible to say.

vv. 14–17. The conversion of Cyrus, representing the north, is now balanced by that of Egypt and the neighbouring countries, representing the south. In xliii. 3 these regions are said to be 'given' to Cyrus as a compensation for his liberality towards Israel. Here, however, their inhabitants are described as 'going over' to Israel of their own free will (comp. προσήλυτοι), and surrendering their wealth (impliedly for sacredness, as xxiii. 18) to Israel:—it is the same prospect which is held out in Ps. lxviii. 31. The inconsistency is only apparent, the later prophecy referring to the Messianic period, when Cyrus shall have given place to the Servant of Jehovah. According to Knobel, these Egyptians and Ethiopians are a part of the captives of Cyrus, who, the prophet anticipates, will present them to the Jews as slaves, to labour on the new building-works at Jerusalem (like the Canaanites in 1 Kings ix. 15–21). A prosaic and most unsuitable theory. What we have here is simply a restatement of

14 Thus saith Jehovah, The labour of Egypt and the earnings of Ethiopia, and the Sabeans, men of stature, shall

the 'triple alliance' of believing nations spoken of in xix. 23–25.——**Men of stature**] Comp. xviii. 2, Herod. iii. 20.——**In chains**] With a primitive love of symbol, these 'proselytes' put chains upon themselves, to represent the new bonds of affectionate reverence which attach them henceforth to Israel.——**Unto thee shall they pray**] An unparalleled expression. It is not, however, to Israel as a collection of human beings, but as divinised by mystic union with Jehovah (comp. on xliv. 11), that prayer is to be offered. The prophet could not have said, 'Unto *you* shall they pray,' but he can venture (for the conception of mystic union was familiar to his readers) on the unusual expression, 'Unto *thee* shall they pray' (comp. Rev. iii. 9 with xix. 10). Delitzsch most aptly compares 1 Cor. xii. 12, where Christ is used synonymously with the mystical body of Christ, i.e., the Church.——**(Yet) surely**] As in liii. 4; Hebr. *'ákén*.——**Thou art a God that hideth himself**] The Sept. paraphrases thus, 'For thou art God, and we knew it not.' Following the hint thus thrown out, we may explain the passage as follows: 'Thou, O Jehovah, art indeed the Strong One, but until now thou hast concealed thy strength both from thy people and from us [or, simply, from us]. We in our ignorance thought that thou wast only the weak god of a prostrate, insignificant people. But now we are forced to acknowledge that Israel's God is the absolutely Strong One, able and willing to deliver (or, save) all who trust in him.' The nature of this deliverance (or, salvation) is indicated in *vv.* 16, 17.—This explanation seems to do the most justice to phraseological usage. The word for 'a God' in the Hebr. is not Elohim (the Godhead), but El (the Strong One); it is the same which is used in the phrase, 'in thee is God.' The expression 'who hideth himself' must be interpreted by the analogy of other passages where its meaning is quite clear (see viii. 17, liv. 8, Ps. lv. 1, and comp. Isa. xl. 27). Its signification, thus determined, is, 'who seems unmoved by the sufferings and the prayers of his servants;' it is, in fact, equivalent to 'who holdeth his peace,' and the verb 'to hold one's peace' is used in xlii. 14, lvii. 11, of Jehovah's apparent neglect of his people during the Babylonian Exile. Hence it may occur to some to take *v.* 15 as an exclamation of the prophet, suddenly struck by the contrast between this bright vision and the glowing reality of the closing period of the Exile:—in the words of Calvin, 'Nunc exclamat Isaias, longâ patientiâ opus esse.' This view is plausible, and if it were not for the phrase, 'O God of Israel,' which follows, and for the abruptness of the transition introduced, it would be worthy of adoption. But on these two accounts the verse must be a continuation of the speech of the converted heathen, and, if so, the phrase 'who hideth himself' must receive a somewhat wider meaning than usual. This involves no violence to the fundamental notion, which is simply that Jehovah gives no sign of his operations, but whether from the point of view of Israelites or heathen, must be determined from the context. In the above

pass over unto thee and become thine: after thee shall they go, and in chains pass over; and unto thee shall they bow down, unto thee shall they pray: 'Of a truth in thee is God, and there is none beside—no Godhead at all. [15] (Yet) surely thou art a God that hideth himself, O God of Israel, saviour!' [16] Ashamed and also confounded are they all; gone into confusion together are the artificers of images: [17] Israel is saved through Jehovah with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded unto all eternity.

[18] For thus saith Jehovah, who created the heavens (*he* is the Godhead), who formed the earth and finished it (*he*

paraphrase I have taken account of both points of view, but I am not sure that it was necessary to do this; hence the alternative words in a parenthesis.—Delitzsch and Dr. Kay give the phrase 'who hideth himself' the sense of 'mysterious,' and regard the passage as a cry of admiration by the prophet or the church at the splendid and far-reaching consequences of the Babylonian Exile. St. Paul's 'O the depth of the riches' (Rom. xi. 33) would be the best commentary on the text thus interpreted. But, besides the objections mentioned above to a change of speakers, I fail to see the requisite points of contact for this view in the phraseology of the context.

[16. 17] The fate of the rest of the heathens contrasted with that of Israel and Israel's vassals (comp. *vv.* 24, 25). The tense, till the latter half of *v.* 17, is the perfect of prophetic certitude. —— **Gone into confusion**] So 'gone into captivity' (xlvi. 2), and perhaps 'he entereth into peace' (lvii. 2), i.e., into a state of captivity, of peace. —— **With an everlasting salvation**] Implying that the promised redemption is spiritual as well as temporal; otherwise Israel would infallibly incur the same penalty again.

vv. 18–25. The foregoing predictions are justified. The chosen people cannot be rejected for ever, nor can Israel dwell in the midst of a desolated world: 'Israel shall blossom and bud and fill the face of the world with fruit' (xxvii. 6). The prophet, however, takes his starting-point, not at the call of Israel, but at creation. Jehovah made the earth as a dwelling-place for man. He then chose Israel to 'seek his face,' and to this 'seeking' he attached certain promises, viz., the salvation of Israel, and through Israel of the Gentile world. *Vv.* 20, 21 are parenthetical; they contain a renewal of the invitation in chap xli. to a debate on the respective claims of Jehovah and the idol-gods. The digression was suggested by the reference to Israelitish prophecy in *v.* 19, but the connection is clearer without it.

[18] **Thus saith Jehovah**] The contents of this revelation are at first given imperfectly. The main point is not merely 'I am Jehovah,' but 'Turn to me, who am the only true God, and ye shall be saved' (*v.* 22). **He is the Godhead**] i.e., the God of gods, the true God. Hebr.

[e] arranged it, he created it not as a chaos, he formed it to be inhabited): I am Jehovah, and there is none beside. [19] Not in secret have I spoken, in a place of [f] the land of darkness; I have not said unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me as chaos; I am Jehovah, who speak [g] righteously, who announce uprightly. [20] (Assemble yourselves and come; approach together, ye who are escaped of the nations:—they are without knowledge who carry the wood of their image and pray unto

[e] So Naeg.—Established, Ew., Del., &c.
[f] So Del., Naeg.—A, Ges., Ew., &c.
[g] Rightly (i.e., accurately), Ew.

hă-'elōhim (not *hă-'ĕ'*, as in xlii. 5). **——Arranged it**] Like a lodging for a friend. The sense of preparation is proved by Deut. xxxii. 6, and (Hifil conjugation) xiv. 21, Gen. xliii. 16, 1 Kings v. 32, vi. 19 (Naeg.). **——Created it not as a chaos**] i.e., not to continue a chaos (Heb. *tōhū*; see on xxiv. 10). Neither here nor in Gen. i. 2 is any light thrown on the origin of *tōhū*.

[19] **Not in secret**] So xlviii. 16. **——In a place of the land of darkness**] So in Deut. xxx. 11–14. Moses recommends 'this commandment' as being both plain and accessible:—'It is not in heaven, that thou shouldst say, Who will go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us . . . neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who will go over the sea for us, &c.' The prophet, as it were, supplements the words of Moses, and declares that Jehovah's *Torah*, or prophetic revelation, is not to be obtained by any occult arts from Sheôl or the Underworld. For the phraseology, compare Job x. 21, Ps. lxxxviii. 12.—The best commentary on alt. rend. is Jer. ii. 31, where Jehovah pathetically exclaims, 'Have I been a wilderness unto Israel? a land of darkness?' i.e., 'Have I not been the source of light and happiness to my people, and all temporal blessings' (comp. Jer. ii. 6)? But it seems doubtful (to say the least) whether the context allows us to interpret the phrase in this sense. 'A land of darkness,' without further explanation, cannot mean 'the desert,' which is only 'dark' (i.e., miserable) to one who is not a Bedawî. **——Seek ye me as chaos**] God is as far from meaning the faithful 'seeking' of his people (comp. Ps. xxvii. 8) to end in barren 'chaos' as he was from permitting 'chaos' to be the ultimate destiny of the world. Comp. the passage quoted above from Jeremiah, where the 'wilderness' is an image of unremunerativeness. **——Who speak righteously . . .**] The heathen oracles are as obscure in their origin as they are unveracious and disappointing. Those who deliver them say, as it were, 'Seek ye me as chaos.' But the revelations of Jehovah are the embodiments of 'righteousness' and 'uprightness.' So in the Discourse of Wisdom, 'The opening of my lips (i.e., that which I utter) is uprightness' (Prov. viii. 6), i.e., never deviates from the straight line of truth and righteousness. 'Speak' = promise, as lii. 6, xxxviii. 15. 'Announce' = prophesy, as xlii. 9.

[20] **Assemble yourselves . . .**] See above on *vv.* 18–25.—The invitation is addressed to those 'who are escaped of the nations,' i.e., to the survivors of the great judgment on the heathen enemies of Jehovah which will immediately precede the final Messianic glory: comp. lxvi. 19, Zech. xiv. 16. **——They are without knowledge**] The truth to which those who had escaped could from their experience bear

a God who cannot save. [21] Announce ye and produce it; let them also take counsel together: who hath declared this from aforetime, and long since announced it? have not I, Jehovah? and there is no God beside me, a God that is (both) righteous and a saviour; there is none beside me). [22] Turn ye unto me, and be saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else. [23] By myself have I sworn, [h] the word hath gone out of my mouth in righteousness,[h] and it shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. [24] Only in Jehovah, [i] it shall be said,[i] are righteousness and strength; unto him shall each one come,

[h] So Targ., Kimchi, Calv., Auth. Vers., Naeg., Weir.—A word has gone out of a mouth of righteousness, Hebr. accents, Del.—Truth has gone out of my mouth, (even) a word, Vitr., Ges., Hitz., Ew.

[i] So Luzzatto (see crit. note).—Text has, He (or, One) said unto me (Ew.); or, One saith of me, Ges., Hitz., Naeg., Weir.

witness.——**Who carry the wood . . .**] viz., in religious processions; see xlvi. 1, Jer. x. 5, Am. v. 26. In line 30 of the Inscription of Mesha the same word, *nāsā*, is used of the Moabitish god Chemosh. Comp. the description of the procession of shrines of Egyptian gods in note on *Herod.* ii. 58 (Rawlinson).

21 **Produce it**] viz., any argument in support of the divinity of the idols (see xli. 21).

22 **Be saved**] i.e., ye shall be saved (comp. viii. 9, lv. 2).

23 **By myself have I sworn**] Jehovah swears 'by himself' ('because he could swear by no greater,' Heb. vi. 13), when the accompanying revelation is specially grand, or specially hard to believe. The phrase occurs also in Gen. xxii. 16, Jer. xxii. 5, xlix. 13; comp. the cognate expression, 'As I live, (saith Jehovah,)' Num. xiv. 21, 28, Deut. xxxii. 40 (*Q.P.B.*). In the present case it introduces the abolition of the last vestige of nationalism in the true religion.——**In righteousness**] Comp. 'who speak righteously,' *v.* 19. On the rend., see Naeg.'s excellent note.——**Shall not return**] i.e., shall not miss its aim (as lv. 11).——**Every knee shall bow**] i.e., in homage, as 1 Kings xix. 18, Phil. ii. 10. A similarly 'universalistic' prophecy is found in Dan. vii. 14. But though the submission is universal, the context shows that it takes place subsequently to the great judgment on Jehovah's obstinate enemies (see on *v.* 20).——**Every tongue shall swear**] Carry forward 'unto me,' and understand 'allegiance,' as in xix. 18; comp. Phil. ii. 11.

24 The submission of mankind shall be unreserved and unconstrained.——**Only**] Or, surely. The two meanings are closely connected; comp. in the Hebr. Ps. xxxix. 6, 7, lxxiii. 1, 13.——**It shall be said**] The text-reading (see above) is very harsh. Perhaps the easiest explanation of it is that a mysterious heavenly voice, like those mentioned at the beginning of the prophecy, is suddenly heard speaking to the prophet.——**Righteousness**] The Hebr. has the plural, 'righteousnesses,' to express abundance (comp. xl. 14), and especially abundant manifestation in act (as lxiv. 5).——**Unto him shall each one come, &c.**] These are probably the words of the prophet, not of the converted heathen. Taken together with the next verse, they contrast the fates of the servants and the obstinate enemies of

and ashamed shall be all those who were incensed against him. [25] In Jehovah shall all the seed of Israel be justified and boast themselves.

Jehovah.——**Each one**] i.e., each of the adversaries.

[25] **In Jehovah**] i.e., joined to Jehovah in mystic union (comp. on *v.* 14).——**All the seed of Israel**] Including those who have, according to *vv.* 6, 14, attached themselves to the true Israel. Comp. on xliv. 5.——**Be justified**] lit. 'be righteous,' i.e. be treated as such (comp. xliii. 26 in the Hebr.).

CHAPTER XLVI.

Contents.—A picture of the fall of the Babylonian idols, on which a powerful appeal is based in favour of the true God. A further argument from prediction, and a warning to the unbelievers, conclude the chapter.

[1] Bel hath bowed down, Nebo hath crouched; their idols are given up to the beasts and to the cattle: your carried things are borne as a load—a burden for the weary! [2] They

vv. 1–2. The scene of this first paragraph is laid in Babylon. The prophet is an imaginary spectator while the most venerated idols are thrown down by the conqueror and carried away in triumph. This, no doubt, was in those times an ordinary event (see x. 10, with note, Jer. xlviii. 7, xlix. 3, 2 Sam. v. 2), but Babylon had thought herself exempt from the common lot of Oriental empires (xlviii. 8)!

[1] **Bel**] Hebraized from Bilu, lord. The prophet means Marduk or (as his name was modified in Hebrew) Merodach, as is clear from a comparison of Jer. l. 2, where the two names occur in synonymously parallel lines. Marduk was originally a solar personification, but was afterwards localised in the planet Jupiter, and later still, when Babylon had grown in importance, identified with Bel.[1] ——**Nebo**] The Hebraized form of Nabu, the Babylonian Mercury. The name means 'the revealer' (compare Hebr. *nâbhî* 'prophet'); originally perhaps the revealer or precursor of the Sun-god (Sayce). ——**Their idols**] i.e., not the images of Bel and Nebo, but the idols of the Chaldeans. 'This is according to usage. The suffix points always to the worshippers of the idols, and not to the divinities supposed to reside in them; as in Ps. cxv. 4, Mic. i. 7, Isa. x. 11, 1 Sam. xxxi. 9' (Dr. Weir). ——**Your carried things**] i.e. the images which used to be carried by priests and nobles in solemn procession (see on xlv. 20). These have now to be resigned to common beasts of burden; hence they are said to be, not 'carried,' but 'packed up as a load.' According to Herodotus (i. 183), the massive

[1] See François Lenormant's *Chaldean Magic*.

have crouched, they have bowed down together; they have not been able to rescue the burden, and their soul hath gone into captivity. [3] Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, who are borne as a load by me from the womb, who are carried from the lap; [4] (and even to old age I am the same, and even to grey hairs *I* will bear; *I* have made, and *I* will carry, and *I* will bear, and will rescue.) [5] Unto whom will ye liken me, and make me equal, and match me, that we may be like? [6] Those who pour out gold from the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, they hire a goldsmith to make it a god; they fall down, yea, they worship. [7] They take it upon the shoulder, they bear it, and set it in its place, that it may stand and not

golden image of Bel (or, as he calls him, Zeus) was carried away by Xerxes.

[2] **They have not been able to rescue . . .**] For a moment the prophet assumes the point of view of the heathen, and distinguishes between the deity and his image. He means to say that if Bel and Nebo had been really gods, they would have interposed for the rescue of their images—for surely the massiveness of the 'load' would not constitute an obstacle! But no, they are not gods at all:—so the prophet adds, **their soul**, i.e., all that there was of a 'soul,' or a personality (iii. 9), in them, **hath gone into captivity.**

vv. 3–4. Jehovah's providential care of his people—what a contrast to the impotence of the idol-gods! Note the meaning repetition of the terms already used in *vv.* 1, 2.

[3] **All the remnant . . .**] The 'house of Israel' is not to be identified with the ten tribes (Kimchi). Throughout II. Isaiah, the captives of Judah (not of course excluding the Judahites who had been left at home) appear as the heirs (conditionally on their loyalty to Jehovah) of the Divine promises to Israel. 'All' is prefixed to meet the case of some timid Israelite hesitating to appropriate the words of comfort (Naeg.). — **Who are borne . . . from the womb**] The figure of the infant and the nurse recurs in lxiii. 9; comp. Deut. i. 31, Ex. xix. 4, Ps. xxviii. 9, Hos. xi. 3. Tender as it seems, it is inadequate to represent Jehovah's affection. The devoted watchfulness of the parent naturally dies away when his child has come to maturity, and the parent is commonly removed by death when his offspring has attained to old age. Not so with Israel and Jehovah. Israel is always the object of the *motherly* care and affection of his God (comp. xlii. 14, xlix. 15, lxvi. 9, 13). Hence the qualifying words in *v.* 4, **even to old age I am the same** (lit. I am He; see on xli. 4).

vv. 5–7. The images of Bel and Nebo remind the prophet of those subtle Jewish idolaters (the 'rebellious ones' of *v.* 8), who thought to worship Jehovah under outward symbols. It is remarkable, says Naeg., that the prophet's controversy with idolatry both begins and ends with an attack upon its most refined form (see xl. 17, &c.).

remove from its place: yea, one crieth unto it, but it cannot answer, nor save him out of his trouble. [8] Remember this, and [a] be deeply ashamed [a]; take it, ye rebellious ones, to heart. [9] Remember former things of old; how that I am God, and there is none else—the Godhead, and there is none like me; [10] who announceth the future from the former time, and from aforetime things that are not yet done; that saith, My purpose shall stand, and all my pleasure will I perform; [11] who calleth a bird of prey from the sun-rising, the man of his purpose from a far country; I have spoken, I will also bring it to pass; I have formed, I will also accomplish it. [12] Hearken unto me, ye obdurate ones, who are far from

[a] So Joseph Kimchi, Vulg., Calv. (nominally on the ground of a bad etymology of text-reading, really from a true view of the context); so too Lagarde (on palæographical grounds).—Text-reading is very obscure. Strengthen yourselves, Targ., Vulg., Rashi, Hitz., Del., Naeg.—Show yourselves men (??), David Kimchi, Auth. Vers., Ges., Ew., Stier.

[7] **They take it upon the shoulder . . .**] The images of Jehovah are as powerless to help themselves and others as those of Bel and Nebo.

[8] The argument for the sole divinity of Jehovah (as opposed to all idols, even those representing Jehovah) is about to pass into a new, a positive, phase. But first of all, the prophet emphatically commends the negative proof just given to the attention of his readers, especially of the idolatrous section (**rebellious ones**, as in i. 28). Then (*v.* 9) with a second 'Remember ye,' he repeats the argument from prediction (comp. xli. 21–29, xlii. 9, xliii. 8–13, 19–21, xliv. 6–10, 24–28). ——**Former things**] i.e., Jehovah's past mercies to Israel (comp. xliii. 18).——**I am God**] Or, developing the Hebr. name *El*, 'the absolutely strong' (comp. xlv. 14).——**The Godhead**] Hebr. *Elohim*, 'the absolutely to be reverenced' (comp. Gen. xxxi. 42, 'the Elohim of my father . . . and the *fear* of Isaac').

[10] **Who announce the future . . .**] Who, from the very beginning of a new period of history, announce the far-off issue, which to human eyes is utterly incalculable (comp. on xli. 26).

[11] **A bird of prey**] So Nebuchadnezzar is called an eagle (Jer. xlix. 22, Ezek. xvii. 3). According to Xenophon (*Cyrop.* vii. 1, 4; *Anab.* i. 10, 12), the ensign of Cyrus and his successors was a golden eagle.——**Formed**] i.e. purposed, as xxii. 11, xxxvii. 26.

[12] It is as if the 'house of Jacob' addressed in *v.* 3 had refused to listen to the Divine oracle. Jehovah, therefore, renews his address in another tone. 'Obstinate as ye are,' he says, 'ye shall not succeed in thwarting my purpose.'——**Ye obdurate ones**] Lit. 'strong-hearted,' which may mean either proud, courageous (as Ps. lxxvi. 5), or, as here, slow of understanding, stupid (comp. vi. 10). 'Hard-hearted' is also used in a bad sense in Ezek. ii. 4, 'stiff-hearted' in Ezek. iii. 7. A similar figure occurs in xlviii. 4*a*. The paraphrase of Henderson and Delitzsch, *les esprits forts*, is too definite as well as too modern.——**Far from righteousness**] i.e., from the salvation which Israel's God has promised, 'righteousness' and 'salvation' being two aspects of one and the same blessing. The 'distance' lay in the unbelieving hearts of these Jews; comp. liv. 14, 'be far (from

righteousness: [13] I bring near my righteousness, it shall not be far off, and my salvation shall not tarry; and I appoint in Zion salvation, unto Israel (I give) my glory.

the dread of) oppression.' Dr. Kay refers to xxix. 13.——**I bring near . . .**] 'For near is my salvation to come, and my righteousness to be revealed,' lvi. 1.

CHAPTER XLVII.

Contents.—Song on the fall of Babylon, in four strophes or stanzas—I., *vv.* 1–4; II., *vv.* 5–7; III., *vv.* 8–11; IV., *vv.* 12–15.

Here the thread of thought is broken (comp. xlvi. 11, 12 with xlviii. 1–8) by a lyric outburst, proceeding mainly from that chorus of celestial beings, traces of which are visible throughout the prophecy (see on xl. 3). It is a 'taunt-song' corresponding to the ode on the King of Babylon in chap. xiv., except that this has the imperative tone of higher beings, whereas that was the emotional vent of liberated slaves. Ewald, regarding the prophecy to which chap. xlvii. belongs as a production of the Exile, declares that 'though formed upon such models as Ezek. xxvi., xxxii., it ranks the highest poetically among all the similar voices of song which in chaps. xl.–lxvi. find utterance' (*Die Propheten*, iii. 63). Del. remarks, 'Isaiah's artistic style may be readily perceived both in the three clauses of *v.* 1, comparable to a long trumpet-blast (comp. xl. 9, xvi. 1); and also in the short, rugged, involuntarily excited clauses that follow.'

[1] Come down and sit in the dust, O virgin-daughter of Babylon; sit on the ground without a throne, O daughter of Chaldea, for thou shalt no more be called Delicate and Luxurious. [2] Take the millstones and grind meal; remove thy veil, strip off the train; uncover the leg, wade through rivers. [3] Let thy nakedness be uncovered, yea, let thy shame

[1] **Come down and sit**] The Hebr. has two monosyllabic imperatives, expressing a decided and unrelenting determination. To 'sit in the dust' is here not, as in iii. 26, a sign of mourning (Ges.), but of humiliation (Hitz., Ew., Del., Naeg.). Comp., 'I raised thee from the dust' (1 Kings xvi. 2), parallel to 'I raised thee from the midst of the people' (1 Kings xiv. 7).

[2] The delicate virgin, emblematic of Babylon, is summoned to perform the duties of a bondmaid.——**Take the millstones**] The special work of female slaves. See Ex. xi. 5 (with Kalisch's note), Job xxxi. 10, Matt. xxiv. 41, *Odyss.* vii. 104, and comp. Van-Lennep's *Bible Lands*, vol. i., p. 87.——**Remove thy veil**] Laying aside all feminine modesty. First of all, however, she must **wade through rivers**, i.e., struggle as best she can to the scene of her servitude.

[3] A common image for the lowest

be seen: I will take vengeance, neither [a]shall I meet any [a].
4 [b]As for our Goel,[b] Jehovah Sabáoth is his name, the Holy
One of Israel.

5 Sit silent, and enter into darkness, O daughter of Chaldæa,
for thou shalt no more be called Lady of kingdoms. 6 I was
wroth with my people, I profaned mine inheritance, and gave
them into thy hand: thou didst not shew them compassion,
upon him that was aged thou didst make thy yoke very
heavy. 7 And thou saidst, I shall be [c]for ever, a lady per-
petually: thou [c] wast not concerned about these things, neither
didst thou remember the issue thereof.

[a] So Junius, Rosenmüller (Ges. regards this rend. as the second-best).—No man sha'l resist me, Symmachus, Vulg. (paraphrasing).—I will not attack (like) a man, Targ., Kimchi, Calv., Auth. Vers. (comp. xxxi. 8).—I will not spare any, Ges., Hitz., Ew., Del., Weir (lit. 'meet with friendly intentions').—I will not supplicate men (for help), Rashi, Naeg.

[b] It is our Goel.

[c] So Hitz., grouping the same words differently. The pointed text runs, For ever a lady, so that (or, whilst, Weir) thou.

degradation; so iii. 17, Jer. xiii. 26, Nah. iii. 5, Ezek. xvi. 37, xxiii. 10, 29, Lam. i. 8.——**I will take vengeance**] Here it is no longer the chorus, but Jehovah who speaks. These reverses of Babylon are a just retribution; they are the 'vengeance' of an offended God. ——**Neither shall I meet any**] Any, that is, who can resist me. The ellipsis is harsh, but is more agreeable to the context than that assumed by the rendering of Gesenius. Comp. lix. 19, Jer. v. 1.

4 **As for our Goel . . .**] The joyous exclamation with which the earthly chorus of faithful Israelites greet the appearance of Jehovah. Babylon has no Goel; Israel's Goel is Jehovah Sabáoth. [This connection, however, seems a little forced. The song would rather gain than lose by the omission of the verse, which may possibly be a marginal note by a sympathetic scribe, which has made its way by accident into the text.]

5 **Sit silent . . .**] Another scene, drawing out a fresh contrast between the busy hum and brilliant variety of Babylon's former life and her present desolation.——**Enter into darkness**] The 'darkness' from which the Jews were just released, xlii. 7, 22 (Ew.).

6 **I was wroth . . .**] The first of two reasons for Babylon's reverses. She had exceeded the limits of her commission, 'for I was wroth a little, and they helped on misfortune' (Zech. i. 15). A similar charge is brought against Assyria (x. 6, 7).——**Upon him that was aged . . .**] Is this to be taken literally? The writings of Jeremiah and Ezekiel do not suggest that the Jewish exiles were great sufferers. Perhaps the prophet may refer to the cruelties which disfigured the first days of the Babylonian triumph (comp. Lam. iv. 16, v. 12); or possibly the conduct of the Babylonians varied, according to the flexibility and submissiveness of the conquered; or, again, the description may be symbolical of the distress of the Jews, somewhat as xlii. 22. Against the un-Biblical view of Ges. and Hitz., that the 'old man' is the people of Israel, it is enough to refer to xl. 28, xlvi. 4 (with Del., Naeg.).

7 The guilt of Babylon is intensified by her reckless arrogance. She

[8] And now hear this, thou voluptuous one, who art seated securely, who sayest in thy heart, I and none besides; I shall not sit as a widow, nor know the loss of children; [9] but there shall come to thee these two things in a moment in one day, loss of children and widowhood,—in their perfection shall they come upon thee, [d] in spite of [d] the multitude of thine enchantments, in spite of the vast number of thy spells. [10] And thou [e] hast been secure [e] in thine evil, and hast said, None seeth me; and thy wisdom and knowledge, they perverted thee, and thou hast said in thine heart, I and none

[d] Amidst, Kay.—Because of, Ew.—Through, Weir.
[e] So Alexander, Naeg.—Hast trusted, Ges., Ew., Del., &c.

presumed that the colossus of her power would never be broken, forgetting the danger of provoking the God of gods.——**Perpetually**] Hitzig's rendering involves no change of the words, but only of the grouping. The construction of the Masoretic text is as awkward as in the parallel case of Gen. xlix. 26 (see *Q.P.B.*). See crit. note.——**These things**] viz., thy cruelties, or, the inevitable retribution attending them.——**I and none besides**] In form the utterance agrees with those of Jehovah (xlv. 5, 6, 18, 22), but the meaning is obviously very different. There it is, 'I am the only true God;' here, 'I am an irresponsible despot.' There is a parallel passage in Zeph. ii. 15, but it is questionable whether any inference can be drawn as to the date of II. Isaiah.——**Sit as a widow**] i.e., in mournful solitude (comp. Lam. i. 1), deserted by the merchants, who once flocked to Babylon. It is a figure from polyandry. Comp. xxiii. 16, and the imitation in Rev. xviii. 7.——**The loss of children**] The people of Babylon are the 'sons of Babylon;' comp. li. 18–20, liv. 1, 4.

[9] **In their perfection**] i.e., in the full extent of their bitterness.——**Thine enchantments**] Babylon was famous for its quasi-scientific development of astronomy, astrology, and all kinds of magic. See Lenormant, *La magie chez les Chaldéens* (Par. 1874), *Chaldean Magic* (Lond. 1878), *La divination et la science des présages chez le Chaldéens* (Par. 1875); Sayce, 'The Astronomy and Astrology of the Babylonians' (*Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.* iii. 145, &c.), 'Babylonian Augury by means of Geometrical Figures;' (*op. cit.* iv. 302, &c.), *Babylonian Literature* (Lond., 1878).——**Spells**] Comp. Ps. lviii. 5 (6), 'the charmers, (even) him that is versed in spells and trained.' The root means binding; comp. καταδεσμος, though we need not suppose that 'magic knots' are expressly intended.

[10] **Thou hast been secure in thine evil**] Obs., the prophet denies any restraining power to the religion of the Babylonians so far as relates to their conduct towards other nations. Among themselves, however, they were in one sense very religious,—δεισιδαιμονέστεροι. The hymns translated by Lenormant and Sayce prove the existence among both the Assyrians and the Babylonians of a genuine moral sentiment towards the gods.—Alt. rend. does not yield a good sense, for how could 'evil' or 'wickedness' as such be a source of confidence? And even if we take 'evil' as a synonym for tyranny or for magic, yet why should the Babylonians be represented as saying, 'None seeth us'? Surely 'he who relies upon his power or his cunning as a complete protection will be not so apt

besides: [11] but there cometh an evil upon thee, [f] which thou hast not the knowledge to charm away,[f] and there shall fall upon thee a mischief, which thou shalt not be able to appease, and there shall come upon thee suddenly crashing ruin, of which thou shalt not be aware.

[12] Persist, I pray, in thy spells, and in the multitude of thine enchantments, wherein thou hast laboured from thy youth; perchance thou wilt be able to profit, perchance thou wilt strike terror! [13] Thou hast wearied thyself with the multitude of thy consultations; let them, I pray, stand forth and save thee—the dividers of the heavens, the star-gazers, who make known, at every new moon, things that shall come upon

[f] So Hitz., Ew., Del., Naeg., Weir.—Of. which thou knowest no dawn, Vulg., Vitr., Ges., &c.

to say "None seeth me," as to feel indifferent whether he is seen or not' (Alexander).

[11] **An evil cometh**] In antithesis to the 'evil' of which Babylon had been guilty (*v.* 10).——**To charm away**] The Babylonians boasted of their knowledge—both mundane and supramundane, but 'knew not' a remedy against this unforeseen calamity. In the Hebr. this verb and that in the parallel line present a striking assonance (*shâkhrâh—kaphphrâh*).—Alt. rend. is, apart from the context, the more obvious one. But it is unnatural to say that the 'dawn' of a calamity means its end, nor is this objection removed by comparing viii. 20, lviii. 8. The parallelism suggests a word analogous to 'to appease,' and the Arabic actually has a word exactly corresponding to the Hebrew root (*saḥara = shakhar*), and with the required meaning.

[12] The last strophe has a strongly ironical tinge, reminding us of Elijah's language to the priests of Baal (1 Kings xviii. 21 &c.).—— **Persist, I pray, in thy spells**]—if one does not succeed, another may; **perchance thou wilt strike terror**, viz., into the enemy.

[13] **The multitude of thy consultations**] The 'consultations' here referred to are scarcely astrological ones, as Sayce, *Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.* iii. 150, supposes. The construction of the sentence (comp. also xix. 11) seems to show that astrology is here the final resource of the despairing Babylonians.—The extent to which astronomy and astrology were cultivated by the early Babylonians and Assyrians has been of late revealed by cuneiform study. As early as the 16th century B.C. it had become necessary to construct a 'standard astrological work,' which consisted of 70 clay tablets, and was deposited in the library of the reigning king Sargina or Sargon of Agane.—— **The dividers of the heavens**] Alluding to the signs of the zodiac (of primitive Babylonian origin), or to some other division of the sky for astrological purposes.——**Who make known, at every new moon**] The calendar of the Semitic Assyrians and Babylonians was borrowed by them from the primitive non-Semitic Accadians. The Accadian year 'contained 360 days and 12 months, each of which is noted as being lucky or unlucky for commencing a campaign, attacking a city, and expecting prosperity for a fortified country or city' (Sayce's paper, as above, p. 160). The prophet apparently refers to the reports which the official astronomers at the various observatories in the empire were required to send in, every

thee. [14] Behold, they are become as stubble, the fire hath burned them; they cannot rescue their soul from the clutch of the flame: it is not a coal to give warmth, a fire to sit before. [15] Such are they become to thy loss about whom thou hast wearied thyself; they that have been thy traffickers from thy youth—flee staggering every one to his quarter, there is none to save thee.

month, to the king. We still possess many such Assyrian reports (Sayce, p. 229), and there can be no doubt that the later Babylonian empire had the same astronomical and astrological arrangements as its predecessor (comp. Dan. ii. 2 &c.). Some of the reports confine themselves to the astronomical facts; others expressly mention political occurrences which the appearance of the sun or the moon foreboded.

[14] These wise astrologers cannot even save themselves from the fire of judgment.——**Not a coal to give warmth**] Not a moderate fire for comfort, but an all-devouring conflagration.

[15] **Thy traffickers from thy youth**] The only other friends of Babylon, viz. the foreign merchants settled in her midst, flee in consternation to their native countries; comp. xiii. 14. On the Babylonian commerce, see Prof. Rawlinson's *Ancient Monarchies*, iii. 15, 16, Lassen's *Indische Alterthumskunde*, ii. 598, 599. The prophet Ezekiel (xvii. 4) calls Babylon emphatically 'the city of merchants.'

SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES.

On I. 4. The latest monograph on the Biblical conception of Holiness is Delitzsch's article, 'Heiligkeit,' in Herzog-Plitt's *Real-Encyclopädie.*

On V. 14. On the Assyrian belief as to the infernal regions, see further M. Clermont-Ganneau's article on a figured tablet in the Assyrian style discovered near Palmyra, *Revue archéologique*, December 1879.

On VI. 1. The date given in the note for the death-year of Uzziah is a compromise between the Hebrew and the Assyrian records. Following the latter alone, the earliest safe date is 740.—Is it possible that the mention of this king's death has a special significance? That the fate of Uzziah, and its lesson of reverence, is alluded to? Obs. the reference in *v.* 6 to the altar of incense, where the rash king committed his trespass (2 Chron. xxvi. 16). (This perhaps over-subtle combination belongs to the Rev. A. J. Mason, of Truro.)

On VII. 14. Besides my own philological note in *Notes and Criticisms*, &c., pp. 7, 8, comp. a note by Dr. Pusey in a University Sermon called *Prophecy of Jesus*, &c. (1878), pp. 47–51.—Dr. Weir wavered much before arriving at the conclusion stated in my commentary. At first he conceived it 'not improbable that the "Alma" here mentioned stood in the same relation to Isaiah as Hagar did to Abraham'; that, in fact, the prophet's handmaiden had accompanied the young Shear-Yashub to the meeting-place at the conduit.

On VIII. 3. 'The prophetess.' Comp. the title *nebîeh*, 'prophetess,' given to Ayesha, Mohammed's third wife, on account of her influence with her husband even in matters of religion.

On VIII. 20. The rendering quoted from Delitzsch is that of his first edition. In his second and third he translates, 'Or shall not they speak thus who are without a dawning?' i.e., 'shall not the people who have suffered so much from neglecting the word of God spoken by the prophets at last join in the appeal to the only true revelation?' Delitzsch (with Knobel and Reuss) takes *'im lo* as the parallel member to *hâlo* in *v.* 21, which strikes me as harsh, considering the interval which separates the members.

On IX. 7 (vol. i. p. 61). In note 1 I have referred to *Q. P. B.* as containing the emendations of Olshausen and Reuss. As this is a mistake, I must here add that these critics (Reuss however speaks doubtfully) suppose a verb to have fallen out of the text. The rendering then becomes, 'God hath established thy throne for ever and ever.' Further consideration, however, has led me to the view, that *Elohim* was inserted by a later hand to make the royal marriage-song more distinctly Messianic.

On X. 9. On Carchemish, comp. my art. 'Hittites' in *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed.

On X. 12, XXVIII. 21. 'Work' means 'work of punishment,' as Ps. xxviii. 5, lxiv. 10, xcv. 9, Hab. i. 5.

On XII. 4. 'Celebrate his name.' Lit., 'call by means of his name.' This may be applied in either of the two senses, 'celebrate' or 'invoke.' Here, as in xli. 25, xliv. 5, the former is alone suitable; comp. Ex. xxxiii. 19, xxxiv. 5.

On X. 5—XII. 6, Introduction. On the invasion of Judah by Sargon comp. Introduction to chaps. xxxvi.–xxxix.

On X. 18. 'Of his forest.' Comp. Dante, *Inferno*, iv. 66, 'La *selva* dico di spiriti spessi.'

On XIII.–XIV. 23, Introduction (p. 79). On the assumption of the title 'King of Babylon' by Sargon, see Lenormant, *Les premières civilisations*, ii. 253.

On XIII. 3. Warriors were 'hallowed' or 'consecrated' by the sacrifices offered before the campaign (comp. 1 Sam. xiii. 9). The prophet boldly declares that the Persian army is not 'consecrated' to Ahuramazda, but to Jehovah.

On XV. 2. Dibon may have been claimed by the Reubenites, but the Inscription of Mesha states (line 10) that 'the men of Gad dwelt in the land ... from of old.'

On XV. 4. 'Zoar.' Mr. Grove places Zoar at the north end of the Dead Sea, in the parallel of Jericho (Smith's *Dict. of the Bible*). This makes no difference to the exegesis, but I prefer the authority of Wetzstein (excursus in Delitzsch's *Genesis*, 4th ed.).

On XVI. 1. Consul Wetzstein, like Dr. Weir, takes *sela* collectively; not however of the rocky region of Petra, but the more northern defiles which issue in the Dead Sea, especially those of the Arnon, with their perpendicular walls of rock, splendidly adapted for hiding-places. See excursus in 3rd ed. of Delitzsch's *Jesaia*.

On XVIII. 2. 'In vessels of papyrus.' Moses' ark was also of papyrus (Ex. viii. 2), and the Mishna speaks of tuns of papyrus (Löw, *Beiträge*, &c., p. 97).

On XX. 2. The parallel passage, Mic. i. 8, deserves special attention. The words 'I will go *stripped* and naked' suggest that the appearance of the prophet is typical of the enforced 'nakedness' destined for his people.

On XXI. 1–10, Introduction. I have forgotten to add that the late Mr. George Smith also refers this prophecy to Sargon's conquest of Babylon (*Trans. Soc. Bibl. Arch.*, ii. 329).

On XXIX. 1. 'Ariel.' Symbolic names were common in the Assyrian empire. Thus in the Monolith Inscription of Shalmaneser we find 'the city of Nappigi' endowed with a second name, 'The Law of Assur,' and 'the city of Rugulitf' also called 'The Command (of Assur)'; *Records of the Past*, iii. 92. So too at Babylon the two great walls were called respectively Imgur-Bel or 'Bel is gracious,' and Nimitti-Bel, or 'Bel is exalted' (Schrader, *K. A. T.*, p. 88). Comp. also Isa. xix. 18 if 'City of the Sun' be the right reading.—Hitzig thinks that the name 'Ariel' alludes to the physical resemblance of the mountain-city to a lion in repose (*Geschichte des Volkes Israel*, p. 32).

'Add year to year.' Comp. on xxx. 29. Wellhausen (*Geschichte*

Israels, i. 98) supposes the interval allowed by the prophet before the siege to be the same as in xxxii. 10. This implies that xxxii. 9–20 is a part of the same discourse as chap. xxix., which is highly improbable, considering the varied contents of the intermediate prophecy.

On XXX. 29. Wellhausen, influenced by xxxii. 10, supposes the 'feast' to be not the Passover, but that of Tabernacles. See however last note.

On XXXII. 10. 'The vintage is consumed.' It is the perfect of prophetic certitude. If the harvest was already over when this short prophecy was delivered (this would bring the date down to July), the words will have double force.

On XXXVI.–XXXIX., Introduction. To the Assyrian documentary evidence respecting the campaign of Sennacherib against Judah and Egypt an addition of some importance has lately been made by the discovery of a new clay cylinder-inscription. It was in 1879 that the British Museum became possessed of it, and I am indebted to my friend Professor Schrader, the eminent Berlin Assyriologist, for the following information. 'The account itself contains nothing particularly new; Hezekiah's tribute is fixed at precisely the same sum as on the Taylor-prism. But the dating of the cylinder is important—in the eponymy of Mitunu (*li-mu Mi-tu-nu*) of the city Isana (*'ir I-sa-na*). According to the list of eponyms,[1] this Mitunu was eponym in the year 700; consequently the Syro-Phœnician campaign had already taken place in this year. And since the Bellino-cylinder, dated in the eponymy of Nabuliḫ, i.e. in the year 702, is silent as to this campaign, it is clear that the campaign against Palestine and Egypt must have taken place between 702 and 700, presumably therefore in 701.'

On XLI. 4. 'I am He.' Comp. John xviii. 5, 6. The effect of the Ἐγὼ εἰμί in *v.* 6 suggests that the words were intended in the Old Testament sense.

On XLII. 11. Consul Wetzstein (Delitzsch, *Jesaia*, ed. 3, p. 700) takes *sela* collectively (as in xvi. 1). 'Inhabitants of rocks' are, he thinks, opposed to the tribes of the open desert. A similar Arabic pair of phrases is in use in the Haurân.

On XLIII. 3. Cyrus himself did not live to invade Egypt, but he is said by Herodotus to have formed the plan of doing so, and on his statue in Persepolis 'he placed a head-dress copied from that of the Egyptian kings, as if he were already master of the valley of the Nile' (Sharpe's *Egypt*, i. 175).

On XLV. 1. 'Thus saith Jehovah . . . to Cyrus'. Taking this in connexion with the remarkable story in Josephus (*Ant.* xii. 1, 2), the conjecture seems permissible that the section xliv. 28–xlv. 7 was written, partly at least, with an apologetic purpose, and intended for Cyrus as well as for Jewish readers. The apologies for the Christians addressed to the Roman emperors missed their mark, and were unread; it is perfectly conceivable that the apology for the Jews addressed to Cyrus was more fortunate.

On XLV. 13 ('Not for price'), and XLVI. 1, 2 ('Bel hath bowed down,' &c.). A long and important inscription in Babylonian cuneiform, about two-thirds of which is preserved, enables me to correct and supplement my notes on this passage. The clay cylinder on which it occurs was found (broken) in one of the Babylonian ruins in the summer of 1879,

[1] Each eponym, the reader will remember, held office for a year, and gave name (like the archons at Athens and the consuls at Rome) to that year.

and is now in the British Museum. Sir Henry Rawlinson read a paper on the subject before the Royal Asiatic Society, and his brother, Professor Rawlinson, published an article upon it in the *Contemporary Review* for January 1880. From the latter I copy the portions which specially illustrate Isaiah. 'My wide-spreading rule was peacefully established throughout Dintir and the many districts of Sumir and Accad. Their good order was not disturbed. The high places of Babylon, and all its fortresses, I maintained in good preservation. . . . To the work of repairing the shrine of Merodach, the great lord, I addressed myself. To me (Cyrus the King) and to Cambyses, my son, the offspring of my heart, and to my faithful army [the God] auspiciously granted his favour, so that we succeeded in restoring the shrine to its former perfect state. . . . Many of the kings dwelling in high places, who belonged to the various races inhabiting the country between the Upper Sea (i.e. the Mediterranean) and the Lower Sea (the Persian Gulf), together with the Kings of Syria and the unknown (?) regions beyond, brought to me their full tribute at Kal-anna (the central part of Babylon), and kissed my feet. . . . The Gods who dwelt among them to their places I restored, and I assigned them a permanent habitation. All their people I assembled, and I increased their property; and the gods of Sumir and Accad, whom Nabonidus had introduced at the festivals (or processions) of the Lord of the Gods at Kal-anna, by the command of Merodach, the Great Lord, I assigned them an honourable seat in their sanctuaries, as was enjoyed by all the other gods in their own cities. And daily I prayed to Bel and Nebo, that they would lengthen my days and increase my good fortune, and would repeat to Merodach, my lord, that "Thy worshipper, Cyrus the King, and his son Cambyses. . . ."' This is merely a state-document, and it leaves us uninformed as to the hidden springs of action of the great Persian monarch. It is therefore still possible, in Professor Rawlinson's opinion, that he was actuated to some extent by religious sympathy with the Jews, who certainly approached nearer to Zoroastrianism than any of the other nations. There is, however, no trace of this in the inscription, which contrasts strongly with the 'proclamation of Cyrus' in 2 Chron. xxxvi. 22, 23, Ezra i. 1–4. How is this contrast to be accounted for? Shall we follow Ewald, who maintains[1] that this edict was 'coloured' by the compiler of Chronicles and Ezra? or Professor Rawlinson, who declares that no Oriental subject would dare to meddle with a royal decree? Both theories are built upon assumptions; Ewald's assumption being that the passages in 2 Chron. and Ezra are derived ultimately from the Persian archives, and Professor Rawlinson's that the Books of Chronicles and Ezra are of the age of Ezra.[2] The former assumption implies a moral backwardness on the part of the Chronicler which, though not incredible, is at least not to be admitted without necessity, while the latter compels us to a non-natural interpretation of the passage in chap. xlvi. of Isaiah. The question is complicated with the 'higher criticism,' and is therefore not to be settled here, nor perhaps anywhere, unless indeed the original 'proclamation' of Cyrus respecting the Jews should one day come to light.

If the author of the inscription may be trusted, Cyrus was a thorough indifferentist in his religious policy. As Professor Rawlinson puts it, he was 'so "broad" in his views, as to be willing to identify his own Ahuramazda, the Maker of Heaven and Earth, the All-Wise, All-Bounteous Spirit, alike with the One God of the Jews, and with the CHIEF god of any and every religious system with which he came into contact.' He goes

[1] *History of Israel*, v. 48, 49. Ewald however evidently has strong doubts whether any part of the original edict has been preserved by the Chronicler.

[2] Professor Rawlinson, in the *Speaker's Commentary*.

even beyond the Assyrian kings in his universal toleration. Sargon, as we have seen (on x. 10), did not really undeify foreign gods, and even arranged (under very special circumstances, see 2 Kings xvii. 26–28) for the propagation of the religion of Jehovah; but Asshur was to be acknowledged by all subject nations as supreme. Cyrus, too, is bound to admit that Ahura-mazda is 'chief of the gods,'[1] but he interprets this religious phrase in a most refined way. Every supreme god is Ahura-mazda under another name—Merodach is Ahura-mazda, and so, we might go on to infer in the spirit of the inscription, Chemosh is Ahura-mazda, and Jehovah is Ahura-mazda.

It was a natural result of such indifferentism that the idols of the conquered nations were left in their sanctuaries. Bel and Nebo are even admitted to a sort of inferior divinity in Cyrus' syncretistic religion (see the last sentence in his inscription). Yet the prophet evidently assumes that Bel and Nebo will be carted away as so much secular plunder. Professor Rawlinson, it is true, does not think this so evident. He takes the passage to mean simply that 'the old Babylonian and Assyrian creed had sunk from a dominant to a subject religion, had become one of many tolerated beliefs.' Is not this a non-natural interpretation of the very strong language of the prophecy? Why not admit that precisely as the prophet in x. 10 involuntarily makes Sargon to speak as an Israelite, so here, from the intensity of his faith, he fails to realize the possibility of religious indifferentism?

[1] *Records of the Past*, v. 151.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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